

Children in Crisis:  
Imperatives and Strategies for the Church in South Africa

By  
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Thanks to God who gave special grace and help  
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Dedicated to my treasured husband,  
mentor and best friend, Reuben

Thanks to God for the privilege of a godly heritage over generations,  
and the blessing of our children loving and serving the Lord—  
Ryan, Darren, Kerry and Byron

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## **Abstract**

This thesis dealt specifically with the topic of children in crisis from a global and then a South African perspective. Child care, or the lack thereof, was considered from a holistic perspective. The research evidenced that many children are in crisis, mainly because of neglect and abuse. These two problems clearly affect the child's physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. The writer proposes that concentration on neglect and abuse, especially if the proposed remedies are implemented, should positively affect the other areas of the child's life.

The primary objective of this thesis was to see how the church could intervene to alleviate the crisis in which many children find themselves in South Africa. Having exegeted relevant biblical passages, the writer presents several imperatives, including changing the perception of adults about children to give priority to their spiritual nurture, as well as addressing their other needs in a holistic manner, the importance of the father-heart of God as reflected in the parental care of children, and the overt training of parents and children in biblical principles by the church, especially in terms of the omission of teachings on sexual purity. The church is challenged to implement strategies to meet the needs of children in crisis in a practical manner. Strategies for healing are suggested and models of godly interventions making a difference in the lives of marginalized children are presented. The role of the Holy Spirit as healer is emphasised.

After concluding that the root cause of the neglect and abuse is the selfish, sinful practices of those who are supposed to be nurturing children, the writer believes that only a changed life, where Jesus is the Lord of one's life, can really make a profound difference in our handling of cases of child neglect and abuse.

# Chapter 1

## 1. Introduction

The evangelical world is aware of the term '10–40 Window' (geographical co-ordinates), which was coined by Luis Bush. Dr Dan Brewster, of Compassion International, first coined the term '4–14 Window' in 1996, based on research by Dr Bryant Myer. This phrase refers to an age-group of children indicating children and youth but used as a catchphrase and not specifically stopping at age 14. Through the efforts of Luis Bush, the Rev. Nam Soo Kim and others, has brought a new focus on this age group to global attention.

Appealing to Christians world-wide to invest in the 1.2 billion children and youth in the 4–14 Window, Bush (2010:1) pleads for a collaborative effort in helping to raise up a new generation that 'can experience personal transformation and can be mobilized as agents for transformation throughout the world'. He has encouraged a holistic approach in this 'transformational initiative', addressing spiritual, mental/cognitive, physical/health, economic, relational, and social issues the children face. He highlights 'ministerial poverty' which shows the neglect of the church and family to give children the opportunity to exercise their gifts and for them to reach their potential in God-honouring ways and to effect godly change in their world for the future. In this study, the elements of the crisis situation in the lives of children in South Africa will be reviewed. Avenues of impoverishment of children and suggested remedies will be detailed, with special emphasis on the role of the church in this regard.

With Luis Bush's appeal in mind, 'It is crucial that mission efforts be re-prioritized and re-directed toward the 4–14 age group worldwide. This requires that we become acutely aware of what is taking place in their lives. We must also endeavour to understand their nature and the essential means to nurture them' (2009:3), I will focus on the South African context of the child in crisis, the current scenario, the preferred scenario and presentations of strategies for effective change to this end.

## **2. The Research Problem**

The evangelical church and how it can address the needs of children in crisis in South Africa.

This primary objective will be achieved by answering five key questions:

1. What global trends in holistic child development are evident currently?
2. What are the most important issues that need to be addressed regarding children in crisis in South Africa?
3. What are the biblical and theological imperatives for holistic children's ministry in response to the South African situation?
4. What can be learned from churches and ministries that are effectively ministering to children in crisis in South Africa?
5. How might the church develop a ministry response?

## **3. The Research Plan**

This thesis will be a study in practical theology utilising the research model developed by Osmer (2008).

Phase 1 of the study (Chapter 2), investigates global trends and thereafter (Chapter 3), investigates specific trends in South Africa from the perspective of Osmer's (2008) descriptive and interpretive tasks surveying the crises facing children in South Africa. This component of the study will draw on existing research data from sources such as official (government) statistics, the findings of research at South African universities in fields such as sociology, community development, and psychology. This phase will ask Osmer's first two questions, 'What is going on?' and 'Why is it going on?' in an attempt to identify the most important issues that need to be addressed regarding children in crisis in South Africa.

Phase 2 addresses Osmer's (2008) normative task, seeking to determine how the Christian community ought to respond to the crises facing children. This phase will

consist of three components. According to Osmer, the normative task will involve all three forms of analysis: (a) theological and biblical interpretation and presentation of imperatives for the church in response to the challenge of children in crisis (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 will present suggested strategies for healing for children in crisis as well as presenting four case studies of models of good practice, i.e. case studies of selected Christian responses to children in crisis. This will involve some empirical investigation and interviews with role-players in these institutions. These include Give a Child a Family, which is situated in Margate, Kwazulu-Natal and which focuses especially on abandoned children and education for foster care, Jerusalem Ministries (and its Human Dignity Centre), which is in Port Elizabeth and concentrates on vulnerable children. There will be some application of the South African Theological Seminary training material 'Walking with Wounded Children' to children in crisis, and a report on a manual I produced for a pilot study for this thesis 'Children in Crisis in South Africa'. Phase 3, which covers Osmer's pragmatic task, formulating a practical response to the situation, includes a detailed report on the Camp Faraway Project in Noordhoek, Cape Town for 'Farming God's Way'.

One could consider the case study application in Chapter 5 as part of the pragmatic task inasmuch as the theory was applied to cases of healing of children in crisis.

In the closure to this thesis, Chapter 6, I will seek to review its content, address specific challenges to the church to serve children at risk, and challenge the GEN-Y and Z generations to make every effort to carry out the Transform Global Summit vision to 'rejuvenate the church to renew the culture' and specifically to extend ministry to neglected and abused children.

## **Chapter 2: The global perspective of holistic child development, with a focus on trends evidenced as child neglect and abuse**

Luis Bush, well known in missionary circles for his vision for the geographical area, the 10/40 Window, is championing a new concept, the 4–14 Window, which describes the eleven years of a child between the ages of 4 and 14 (Bush 2010:3).

Bush (2010:3) is excited to see that Christian leaders world-wide have responded to his plea, to come together to consider the strategic importance and potential of the 1.2 billion children and youth in the '4–14 Window'. It is a plea for the church to adopt a new paradigm of emphasis on this age-group to make an overt effort to reach and empower a new generation from within this enormous group—'a generation that can experience personal transformation and can be mobilized as agents for maximum transformation throughout the world, even while young'.

In order to do this effectively one needs to address the spiritual, mental, physical, relational, economic and social issues which they face. Bush (2010:3) raises the issue of dealing with their 'ministry poverty'—the scarcity of opportunities for them to exercise their gifts and achieve their potential in ways that honour God and advance His Kingdom. He states that it is crucial that mission efforts be re-prioritized and re-directed toward the 4–14 age group worldwide. This requires intimate knowledge of their day go day lives so that they can be nurtured effectively, knowing their needs, nature and potential. 'Only then will we be able to reach them, shape them, and raise them up to transform the world'.

There has been such interest raised in the 4–14 Window, and so much work done by Christians all over the world and in diverse capacities just since the first global Summit in New York in 2009, that the term '4–14 Movement' was coined. By the Global Summit in New York in 2010, hundreds of items of media have been produced, resources for children and books have been written and again multiplied by the following Summit in Singapore in 2011. I had the privilege of attending these latter summits, and could see for myself that there were far more people and resources. According to the website [4to14window.com](http://4to14window.com), the number of delegates in 2011 in

Singapore increased to 800 from 75 countries from the previous year's conference in New York, which had 300 delegates from 65 countries. The missions' organizations, Christian para-church organizations and NGOs have caught the vision, but what about the local church and family (even the Christian family unit)? How can we alert the church to the problem of undermining the value and potential in children, to start to see them as potential transforming agents, that they can experience the reality of lives changed in a real relationship with Christ, and can be used as instruments of reform even as so many biblical accounts of children reflect ? I believe that even within our local churches the often sub-conscious, non-verbalised negative attitudes block the development and potential of children... 'This is for the adults; the children have Sunday School which should give them the spiritual food that they need'.

Scott Todd, one of the plenary speakers at the 4–14 Third Global Summit in Singapore (6–9 September 2011), captured in a report from the Summit on the transform.net website, said:

In the United States in the 1950s, the youth market was small. Today it is a \$200 billion market. Children ages 2 and up are targeted by advertiser's in a \$15 billion industry. Today, the average US child spends 14 hours a week watching television and less than an hour in conversation with family. This youth movement has led to a culture of greed, consumerism, materialism.

North Korea, Mao, Hitler, Madison Avenue all see the potential in children. Now the church must see it too. Children are critical. Children are vital.

We must stand shoulder to shoulder as advocates for children. \$15 billion is nothing compared to the resources of the Kingdom.

These comments graphically show the neglect of families in terms of quality time spent with children, and the lack of the parents giving personal censorship in what media they allow to influence their children, so much of which is overly contradictory to biblical, godly values.

The 'lip-service' given to the importance of children does not carry through to genuine nurture in a holistic way. It should extend into caring during the week by godly mentors—physically, emotionally as well as spiritually. This should also incorporate the willingness to allow children to serve actively in the church. They could so easily be involved in ministry, caring, learning to serve, for example, helping with the sound system, the collection of communion glasses, welcoming people at the door, being involved in the worship, dramettes and prayer groups.

Bush (2010:3) realizes that there is very real opposition and there are obstacles to this challenge, especially to empower the 4–14'ers to become a transformational generation. Bush urges his readers to press on, engaging in strategic global thinking and answering God's call to catalytic action, within a biblical framework.

He (2010:3) asserts that such global transformation will only take place as individual Christians are willing to change their mind-set regarding children who are so often perceived as the 'underdogs' to be tolerated or considered incapable of doing much good. Bush refers his readers to Romans 12:1–2, which emphasises the importance of having our minds renewed:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Only God can really renew our minds to engage with this divine task as He would have us do ('Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me', Matthew 18:5).

This transformational mission of society would be directly under the headship of Christ (Ephesians 1:9–10) through the church, which is His body. This consists of the entire global body of believers, including and focussing on the children and youth in the 4–14 Window as the major agents of transformation as Bush describes (2010:3).

This is also a major consideration that should be brought to the attention of the church. The church body is sometimes not aware of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20), which is Jesus’ own instruction to His disciples to make other disciples.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

This is not an instruction only to church leaders, or specific to church meetings, or to adults for adults—it includes children, as does the whole Bible. It is vital therefore, that each believer seriously follows the Lord and nurtures others in the Lord daily, exemplifying a worshipful, godly, discipling lifestyle on the Lord’s Day and all the days in-between.

Bush (2010:3) encourages us to adopt the phrase ‘transformed and always transforming’, reminding us that transformation is a process and is not fully realized until Jesus comes again. ‘We are co-labourers with Christ, under His headship, collaborating with Him in His transformational mission to raise up a new generation from the 4–14 Window to transform the world’, states Bush, adding that we would need to depend on God to renew our minds through His Word and this vision, and desiring that we would be the agents of change to transform the world for the glory of Christ.

Zuck (1996:17) makes some thought-provoking comments on the significant impact of the childhood years on adult life, and in the context of transformation he paints a picture of its effect when a child’s life is valued and he is treated with significance. He, in turn, can grow up a potential ‘transformer’.

Because an individual’s early experiences profoundly influence his or her entire life, concern for children is critical. Children readily pick up and copy the attitudes, interests, values, beliefs and actions of adults around them. And many of those perspectives stay with them

throughout their lives. What children notice in others, they begin to copy and appropriate in their own lives. And many of those actions and attitudes stay with them permanently.

Dr Dan Brewster, of Compassion International (2010: 3) first coined the term '4–14 Window' in 1996, based on research by Dr. Bryant Myer. Brewster states, 'God's expectation is that all children will develop as holistically as Jesus did as recorded in Luke 2:52: "in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and man". But many children do not have this opportunity for development in this four-fold way.' He asks how Christians should promote the holistic development of children.

Brewster (2010:53) speaks about the term 'holistic' as referring to wholeness in the context of God creating man in His image, as spiritual and physical, with every aspect of our lives being equally significant. He emphasizes the importance of the 'holistic' development being perceived from a biblical and Christian perspective where we seek to understand God's view of 'personhood'. This will imply that we consider the relevant passages in the Old and New Testament and will involve nurturing the child spiritually, physically, socially, psychologically and in all other aspects. We need to address present needs and look for practical life-change towards outcomes of restoration, peace with God and people, contentment, wholeness, and confidence, recognition and the fostering of potential.

Brewster (2010:53) suggests that a vital aspect of development is to bring the child to a position of self-reliance or self-sufficiency-not discounting his reliance on God, but using his talents and thought-processes efficiently in life. This implies that the children, once in need, now look at their own knowledge, strength, financial or other resources to meet their own needs. This process does not reject assistance from others. He asserts,

Holistic development is certainly not **welfare**. Many societies have created extensive "welfare" programs to care for the needy and less fortunate among them. Welfare programs usually make no distinctions between the deserving and non-deserving poor. Assistance is provided simply based on a person's income or status, regardless of why that person has become needy, what destructive

behaviours he or she may have engaged in or what are his or her real needs, abilities and potential. Continued giving, especially of money, aggravates the problem rather than solving it (2010:62).

According to Brewster (2010:65), poverty has a spiritual rather than a material root. When the mindset is changed to have a Christian (Christ-centred), not 'westernised' ethos, i.e. without cultural sensitivity and relevance (or paternalistic, dictatorial, from a pedestal of power), the problem can be addressed from the correct base. This Christian holistic development considers the desires and abilities and contribution of the children who are being helped. Even though we want children to see their potential and giftedness as coming from the Lord, and we want the children to become more and more reliant on Him to help them realize their potential, and to be willing to receive help from mentors and those whom the Lord would bring to support, we want them to embrace who they are and to take the initiative to become 'independent'/'self-reliant'.

This 'self-reliant' person knows she is in the image of God and is valuable. She knows she has talents, intelligence, physical strength, creativity, much understanding of her culture and the ability to solve problems, resources for example, land, money – able to generate income through her effort. She can have a great sense of community where she can help others, change inconsistencies and negative non-profitable practices. She can be proud of her contribution (not arrogant) and can give glory to God for His enabling. Even though she appreciates assistance, she is not dependent on outside monetary help, motivation, resources or technology for her survival. The ultimate aim in terms of character-building, according to Brewster (2010:66), is for her to become self-confident, willing to tackle challenges with enthusiasm, knowing that if they are difficult to surmount, God will help her to find a way of gaining success, and she will grow in strength of character as she perseveres and implements careful, thoughtful decisions.

Brewster (2010:68), warns parents about ways in which they can damage the healthy development of character as described earlier, things which actually prove to be counter-productive for the development of self-esteem and healthy self-reliance. These would include giving children everything that they want. Parents know however

that some things are detrimental. They should give them things they need, but not withhold support—there is a delicate balance.

Brewster (2010:68) contends that the ideal in the home and for surrogate parents, mentors and carers, for holistic child development, would be to give children a warm, loving, caring environment, giving them room to try for solutions, for 'failure' and remediation for new opportunities for success. Children, he rightly suggests, should be given responsibilities, i.e. chores, and opportunities to participate in family activities. They should obey home rules for example, bed times and meal-times, which contributes towards the smooth running of structured secure households. Clearly, there is a certain 'interdependence'—everyone contributing towards unselfish service and the well-being of all within that environment.

How can we provide inputs to children to encourage healthy self-reliance? Brewster (2010:69) has made some excellent suggestions to promote the process of a healthy 'self-reliance':

- Allow children to do what they can do themselves without intervening.
- When help is given, look for a contribution from the recipients, even in time and labour—they will appreciate it more.
- Focus on learning. Children can take what they learn and use it in the future.
- Start where the children are and with what they have available in and of themselves – including their own interests and major concerns.
- Encourage them - positively reinforce each step that children and their parents take to meet their own needs and solve their own problems.
- Go at the pace of the child or his group. Small successes are vital in order to gain the confidence to take the next steps.
- Know when to phase out. Long-term projects allow nurture and inter-action with the children over time, and modelling for care-givers (in teaching and life-style, as Jesus did), but can be counter-productive if they cause dependency.

- Understand how people define 'success' in their own context. What activities (where helped) will they consider as worthwhile?
- Allow them to fail. We learn to depend upon ourselves through failure as well as success.
- Keep promises. Do not attempt unsustainable projects.
- Link people to resources: local materials, government goods and services, low-cost supplies, counselling, expertise and advice, information, pastoral care and spiritual resources.

Brewster (2010:73–74) adds,

The direction of development is always toward wholeness. It is not enough to improve only one dimension of a person's life and leave other dimensions in inadequacy. To treat parasitic infection is noble. But if a treated child is left in an unsanitary environment with contaminated water, the intervention is incomplete. If a family's economic situation is improved but a debilitating health problem is not solved, the intervention is incomplete. If a person receives an education but social structures prevent him from getting a job, the intervention is incomplete. If a person is introduced to faith in Christ and enjoys spiritual freedom but is left in poverty and oppression, the intervention is incomplete. The scope of development is toward completeness and holism.

It is generally accepted, that the ultimate objective of any counselling is to assist other individuals to move to their personal wholeness, as typified by the *Concern Counselling* website. This would assist them towards taking responsibility for themselves.

Brewster (2010:90) concurs with this objective for holistic development and adds that he believes that a life of wholeness and adequacy is a life where one's own talents, giftedness, and creativity are developed and enjoyed. It is an environment where people (including children) are productive, have adequate education, and have enough resources to be healthy and well-nourished.

In expounding on this life of wholeness Brewster (2010:90) states that the bonds and restraints of poverty, ignorance and oppression are broken and people are free to take charge of their own lives, see options, and opportunities, make choices. These are therapeutic to the mind and soul. They (children and families), feel so much better about themselves. 'Confidence and self-esteem rise. Defeatism dies and hope blossoms'.

Finally, Brewster (2010:84) addresses poverty as 'a lack of wholeness' He argues that we think of the poor lacking things like food, shelter, clean water, land and other resources. But poverty extends far beyond these physical things, extending to emotional and spiritual lack, physical weakness, a sense of hopelessness or powerlessness, of isolation (with a lack of choices/alternatives) and just being vulnerable. The poor may lack ideas, knowledge and skills. Christian development workers would suggest a lack of understanding about God and the Gospel as well. Sadly, Christian aid workers are often considered as 'suppliers of need' almost like 'Father Christmas'.

I believe that a huge task of the Christian fraternity is to give new hope to the poor. There are options. They can make decisions; they can get out of the rut/pit—but only together with God, not escaping from God and reality where they often turn to substance abuse. Children, who grow up without options, as did their parents, will most likely follow suit unless there are interventions. Education is a major intervention, as was shown in India amongst the Dalits (the 'untouchables'). Many children are no longer in this caste because they have been properly educated and have been channelled into an intercession ministry where there are remarkable results. Actual examples of this turnaround have been recorded on a DVD, Trash to Treasure showing Father Anton and the Royal Kids.

In many countries, those with insufficient education struggle to find good jobs. Business owners often take advantage of uneducated employees, who, in desperation, accept employment in inhumane conditions, but, as Olson, Dean and Friedrich (1989:108) point out, will continue to work just to provide for their family. The alternative is often slavery, and particularly in the sex trade.

This kind of environment makes these people lose their self-esteem. According to the website of the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) in Britain, they often abandon hope and become apathetic or fatalistic ‘victims’ and not even ‘survivors’.

Another task of the Christian fraternity is therefore advocacy, so that world-wide, the plight of children, especially those in crisis situations, can be made known and addressed. Olson, Dean and Friedrich (1989:11) simply raise the need for advocacy.

Advocacy is what a parent does without a second thought when one’s own child is in need. What comes less naturally to us is to advocate for the well-being of others’ children and yet that’s what caring for “the least of these” requires.

As I consider Matthew 25: 39 and 40, (‘And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me”), I agree with them that the Christian, who should have the added dimension of being less selfish and more caring and compassionate than the general unbeliever, should be looking out for hurting children. A genuine love and concern from Christ Himself, should constrain him/her to care, and to overtly advocate for justice and for the well-being for every child. Similarly Philippians 1:9–11 voices Paul’s heart-felt desire, ‘And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.’

Jeyaraj (2008:1), recently retired Director and Professor of Jubilee Institute, Madurai and Honorary Chairman of Christian Forum for Child Development (CFCD), Bangalore, is one of the 4–14 role players actively championing change in theological institutions to encompass child theology, and especially holistic child development programmes. Some of his Ideas about holistic child development which pertain specifically to India, but with great global application, were first presented in an international consultation in Pune, held from 3–7th November 2008. His paper suggests ways in which the emerging Holistic Child Development Movement could inspire innovative courses in

theological education in different parts of the world, focusing on the cause of children to build the future generations. In it he argues,

Theological education in India is a big enterprise with the mushrooming of Bible colleges in some cities training pastors, evangelists and missionaries. Indian theological education encompasses indigenization and contextualization of theological education (after the 1970s) by formulating theologies such as liberation, humanization, dalit, tribal, environment and feminism emerging from their own context.

As is the case throughout the theological world, in India, Jeyaraj (2008:5) notes that graduates of B.Th. and B.D./M.Div. programmes emerge from seminaries having studied between twenty six and thirty two subjects, but without having skills for special tasks within the church and society, especially in the realm of ministry to children. He rightly asks why students cannot specialize in a particular field of ministry to women, children or musicology. He points out that many women students want to learn courses on Holistic Child Development for their future ministry with families or NGO's or mission societies, but at present such HCD programmes are not available for them to specialize during their basic degree programme or even at the M.Th. and doctoral levels.

The good news, Jeyaraj (2008:3) says, which the theological world needs to hear, is that there are specialized programmes in Holistic Child Development developing at undergraduate level. Some postgraduate programmes are developing gradually in India and abroad. At a consultation held in Chiang Mai, sixty research topics in the field of HCD were listed, and more than thirty subjects have been listed by the Curriculum Planning Committee of the Christian Forum for Child Development (CFCD) in India. Nevertheless, even though these HCD programmes are fairly new, Jeyaraj says that they are still ignored unconsciously or neglected deliberately in most of the theological institutions.

As reasons he suggests the following:

- Churches do not realize the importance of children in families, society and churches.
- Treating children as recipients of learning rather than listening to what they say. They can also respond to issues that affect them sharing their views and expectations.
- In theological education, the study of children is usually assigned to the Department of Christian Education, incorporated within the study of women and society.

In this regard Jeyaraj (2008:6) makes a profound observation:

The understanding of children by the Department of Biblical Studies or in the history of Christianity or in the writings of great theologians namely, Augustine, Martin Luther, Calvin or Indian Christian theologians or in the scriptures of various religions is not yet fully explored in seminaries except a few theses on the social problems of children.

Jeyaraj (2008:6) argues that the real problem of acceptance of new courses on HCD (even as electives) by Indian authorities, for example, the Senate of Serampore, as well as by the Board of Asian Theological Association (ATA), is a reality. Even though para-Church organizations, denominational groups and seminaries are focusing on children through their programmes (for example, orphan and children care, health and education), there does not seem to be a group devoting their full effort to developing child theology for HCD (2). To develop effective 'Child Theology' HCD programmes, he argues, requires teachers and academic researchers to do more preparation, monitoring and evaluation as well as the involvement of children from various strata of society—rich, middle class, poor, upper caste, schedule caste/tribe and different religions and cultural traditions. Their perceptions, views, problems and expectations differ. So the question is about linking theoretical studies with practical requirements. These structures, specific to India, can easily be related to the various 'levels' of contextual differences in other parts of the world.

Jeyaraj (2008:6) cites another example of a common global mindset, namely that schools and church-run institutions are satisfied with merely giving formal education to children. They are not influenced to promote Child Theology and work for the holistic development of children. Nevertheless, some state governments provide free mid-day meals to children in schools but without dealing with other socio-economic and psychological problems they face.

In focusing on children in crisis in South Africa in this study, I see many commonalities with the situation in India, which, although worse in many areas, illustrates the risk factors and warns us of serious consequences. As we consider the children at risk and the reasons for these problems, as reflected in India, the considerations of the current situation in Africa and South Africa in particular, will be seen more clearly in the global context.

Jeyaraj (2008:6) mentions that many are not aware that millions of children are at risk in different parts of the world. He mentions that no child, whether rich or poor, urban or rural, is safe today. Any child could be kidnapped for sexual abuse or be involved in child labour so that the family can receive financial gain. To illustrate his point he quotes the following statistics: Out of 400 million children at risk, more than 200 million children are in crisis facing one or the other problem. It was estimated that India had 400 million children below the age of 14 in 2004, a quarter of whom (between the ages of five and fourteen) were not in schools. He suggests that most would be at home involved in domestic work (as is the case in many rural homes in South Africa), or employed as child labour in the carpet industry, the manufacture of fireworks, in automobile workshops and in some dangerous jobs. In India more than 10 million children die each year because of poverty, malnutrition, ethnic conflicts and war in different parts of the world. Jeyaraj details the over three million (under eighteen) child soldiers for rebel armed forces world-wide, carrying guns and bombs and preparing for suicide attacks. Many of them have entered into schools just to learn the use of weaponry. He notes the thousands of orphans whose parents have died through HIV/AIDS, suicide, accidents or ethnic conflicts. He also notes that in 2007, nine million children in Africa celebrated Mother's Day without their mothers, who had died of AIDS. He adds (7)

We highlight the fact that an horrific number of female fetuses are aborted in various clinics in India as the prohibitive cost of dowries which have to be paid for brides, makes the poor feel that females are not worth keeping in the family.

He points out too that especially in India, children disappear daily en-route to school or at festivals or picnics and excursions. Jeyaraj (2008:6) highlights the unsatisfactory atmosphere within many schools which are so oppressive that many children actually drop out of school or run away from home to become street children. 'Children from devadhasi families are forced to practice that system by some villagers'. Child sacrifices for the sake of religious ritual, still occur in remote parts of India. 'Marrying a girl child to an elderly man goes on due to poverty or custom of the caste and village. Girls between the age of 11 to 18 from poor families in villages are bought for Rs.3000 and sold for Rs.50,000 in sex trade going on in big cities.'

Clearly, the sexual abuse of children, and often by family members, relatives and neighbours, leads many children to go through psychological trauma and social alienation. I have had affirmed to me by Ruth Mbennah, African leader of Trans World Radio Project Hannah, that children who are forced to have sexual relations early in life (for example, in countries like Tanzania), are often physically damaged, causing problems like the loss of control of the bladder, and thereby resulting in social stigma and rejection.

The crises amongst Indian children are clearly similar to those of children at risk in South Africa and are worth detailing, as they are the basis for considerations later in this study, even though the focal consideration will be the resultant child abuse in these areas. Some globally common phenomena would include poverty, lack of medical facilities, lack of schools and education, unemployment, malnutrition, environmental degradation, illiteracy, alienation of land from communities, disparity in wages and scale of pay, and the widening gap between the rich and poor.

Sociologically common factors would include the structure and system of our society. Jeyaraj (2008:7) notes that In India there is exceptionally serious discrimination, as evidenced by the caste system, where examples would include the dalits/untouchables, religion, patriarchy and gender. Alcoholism and drug addiction

have broken families and forced children onto the streets. Poor parenting, divorce and separation are affecting the social atmosphere at home causing children distress and impeding progress.

Politics too can damage children. In India wrong governmental policies encouraging violence and conflicts between communities for cheap political gain and political movements recruiting children and training them for their ideologies (for example, Islamic groups, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which according to Wikipedia is a right-wing, Nationalist, Hindu, paramilitary, volunteer organization for patriotic Hindu males in India with an ideology based on the principle of selfless service to the nation, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), described by Wikipedia as a Hindu organization aiming to protect, promote and propagate Hindu values of life and Naxalites/Naksalvadi, referring to various militant Communist groups operating in different parts of India under different organizational envelopes, such as Maoists (in the eastern states), but known to be terrorist organizations. These and other insurgent movements in North East India have affected the population of children, leaving them, according to Jeyaraj (2008:7), feeling hopeless about their future.

In South Africa generally children are not affected, though two state interventions have, I believe, caused serious damage, namely, removing Christian Education from schools and promoting acceptance of all faiths. This has degraded Christianity and caused confusion for children. In addition, in February 2011, President Jacob Zuma, aggravated the situation by saying that voting for the ANC would allow voters to go to heaven (as reported by the Daily Mail).

Jeyaraj (2008:8) exposes the abuse of children for religious purposes in India which, in the extreme, encourages child sacrifices, marriage to elderly men, use as mediums for evil spirits, sorcery, children being thrown into the river or offered as temple prostitutes for the gods and goddesses All these practices have devalued the life of children where they are treated as commodities for religious rituals and customs.

The media have brought these atrocities to the attention of the public over the years.

Churches have been working for the children, particularly taking care of orphans and giving education and medical treatment through their schools and hospitals. The

United Nations Organisation (UNO) has required its member nations to accept the Child Rights Declaration and implement it. NGOs in India, both Christian and secular, are working for the welfare of the children.

At the same time, Child Theology for HCD is developing in North America, Europe, India and South East Asia. Its leading proponents include Prof. Marcia Bunge at Valparaiso University, some scholars at Fuller Theological Seminary in the USA, Dr. Keith White and Dr. Hadden Wilmer in the UK, Dr. Dan Brewster, Dr. Menchit Wong, Dr. Sunny Tan, Dr. Rosalind Tan and Dr. Theresa Lua in South East Asia and scholars and practitioners in the Christian Forum. Jeyaraj lists the HCD curriculum offered by various institutions, and as I believe this is part of the holistic overview and adds context to this study, I will include them here.

In the Global Academic Consultation on HCD held in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 13–17 May 2007 and later in the Consultation held in Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena from 25–28, 2008 the following components were listed as important necessary components of each curriculum in total, though not necessarily in each subject: Biblical Perspectives, Theological Basis, Contextual dimension, Ecclesiastical aspects, Ministerial perspectives and Missional dimension. The general objectives of the curriculum of HCD had been discussed in various consultations on Children at Risk (CAR) and HCD held in Bangalore (2–3 September 2005 and 17–18 March 2006), Pune (October 2007), Kolkata (24–26 January 2007) and Global Alliance-South Asia Consultation on Curriculum and Resource Development (SAC-CARD) held in Bangalore from 11–14 February 2009. These objectives included, to:

- keep biblical perspective on children and their development;
- study the status, role and problems of children in families, churches and society;
- identify the reasons for and the oppressive forces affecting children;
- analyze the issues and develop strategies for the empowerment of children;

- develop partnerships and co-operation between churches, seminaries, NGOs and missionary organizations for the exchanging of views, information and involvement at micro and macro-level; and
- obtain a verifiable positive results in caring, developing and empowering children as an outcome of theological education.

A few subjects have been already created and offered in some seminaries, for example, at South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies (SAIACS), ‘Biblical Understanding of Children and Pastoral Perspectives’ and ‘Foundations for HCD’ are offered to M.A. and M.Th. students respectively. At Union Biblical Seminary (UBS), a subject for the M.Th. students is offered in the Department of Christian Ministry.

Under the auspices of the Senate of Serampore College (SSC) and Asia Theological Association (ATA), the syllabus of ‘Introduction to Child Theology’ is ready for the B.D./M.Div. programmes in colleges. Another seminary has a course planned for ‘Family, Parenting and Child Development’ for their M.Div. students. The Association for Theological Education by Extension (TAFTEE) is incorporating the HCD aspects into their curriculum of the B.T.S and M.T.S degrees. So far only one or two individual subjects are offered to students in the B.D./M.Div. or M.A. or M.Th. in the above seminaries.

In the global context, the Malaysian Baptist Theological Seminary is offering a full-fledged MA in HCD. Fuller Theological Seminary offers six modules for PhD with a specialization in HCD in its School of Inter-Cultural Studies. Asia Graduate School of Theology (AGST) is also offering a programme in HCD. The South African Theological Seminary (SATS) is offering Certificate courses for example, ‘Connecting with Children’ and ‘Walking with Wounded Children’ and has made ‘Introduction to Youth and Children’s Ministry’ compulsory for B.Th. students. At Master’s level one can do a structured programme in Play Therapy.

The aim of this thesis is to add prescribed reading to Children’s ministry students in order to educate more ministry workers in Holistic Child Development, especially for the 4–14 window and to help workers dealing with children in crisis, particularly for those who are suffering abuse.

The Christian Forum for Child Development (CFCD- India) in co-operation with Global Alliance for HCD, a partner unit of Compassion International, is promoting HCD programmes in seminaries and for NGOs. Global Alliance for Advancing HCD–South Asia unit, with the help of CFCD, is promoting, M.A., M.Th. and Ph.D. programmes and aims to develop courses, train faculty members and build resources. Already more than thirty subjects have been identified. HCD in M.A., M.Th. or Ph.D. can be offered as inter-disciplinary programmes with the integration of theory and practice.

Jeraraj (2008:10) suggests that the Department of HCD in a seminary can co-ordinate the team teaching of faculty members from several departments, monitor the practical involvement of those students with children, and work out placement for their future ministry. This would be suited to the special interest of each student, pastor or social ministry worker to work among the children of abused or affected by HIV or those who work with prisoners, sex workers or children from broken homes or orphanages. He affirms the need for the personal involvement of the student as part of the requirement in the curriculum of HCD, as this strengthens the integration of learning theology and praxis. It opens the eyes of students who come to the seminaries for theological education and touches their spirituality, their perspective on humanity and enables them to move their churches and missions towards caring for children at risk. It also helps those practitioners coming from mission fields or projects of NGOs with first-hand experience of working among children learn its theological basis.

In endorsing offered specialized courses via distance learning, including periodic contact courses, Jeyaraj (2008:10) states that these courses help contextualisation for better relevancy for churches and society. The quality of the HCD programme depends upon the way the components are incorporated into the core and optional subjects, using different teaching methods, requiring involvement with the children, writing the research project and proving with realizable evidence actual transformation in the area of holistic child development within society.

Teaching this Holistic Child Development material and giving practical experience with the children is particularly pertinent to ministry workers dealing with children in Crisis and particularly those suffering from severe abuse. In this respect, a personal suggestion is to provide Counselling manuals to identified godly children who could be

catalysts for transformation, not in order to counsel traumatised children, but in order for them to recognize symptoms of abuse or crisis and to come alongside as godly friends. These topics would cover holistic needs, some examples of which are:

- recognising symptoms of children suffering abuse (sexual or alcoholic or other substance abuse);
- understanding the symptoms reflected in the life of a child suffering from the daily trauma of taking responsibility in dysfunctional homes, for example, child-headed households or single-parent households where the parent is absent most of the time (usually the complete absence of a father-figure);
- a note on grief (recognizing grief and being helped in the process) because so many are in a state of shock-‘numb’ as a result of so many family members or community members dying of AIDS;
- addressing the issue of poverty alleviation, for example, through training children to plant a ‘well-watered garden’ pioneered by ‘Farming God’s Way’. (This course is freely downloadable on [www.satsonline.org](http://www.satsonline.org)).

All of these deprivations mentioned in the ‘Children in Crisis in South Africa’ Manual, which cause emotional brokenness, need to be addressed in a spiritual manner, for example, through finding Jesus as Saviour, training for which is provided by EE3 for Children, and being lovingly disciplined and nurtured by being pointed to godly Christians in support roles. The local church could be a healing community source if concerned children’s ministry workers and those with a burden for children, were given training in these and other relevant materials to help them mentor and give godly counsel at an age-appropriate level.

Jeyaraj (2008:10) concedes that as the HCD programme is new and innovative, it has a long way to extend into full-fledged programmes in India. Listing of courses, writing each syllabus, building the library resources and training the faculty members are tasks ahead of theological colleges that wish to offer HCD courses. Realistically, not all the seminaries will be able to offer full-fledged HCD programmes, but each can make a significant contribution, even by adding one or two core subjects on Family,

Parenting and Child Development to their B.Th., B.D./M.Div. programmes. He suggests that some seminaries and a few special institutes for HCD in different regions of India can plan and offer full-fledged M.A., M.Th. and Ph.D. in HCD programmes. Jeyaraj states that he believes that any innovative programme like HCD in India cannot be well-established without the support of churches, missions and NGOs. He cites Compassion, World Vision, KNH, Viva network and other para-church children's ministries. They provide field-opportunities for ministry as well as the feeder of personnel for training and teaching. He challenges institutions by name, as well as other agencies involved in theological education, to extend their expertise in developing the curriculum and recognizing the programmes. I believe that Jeyaraj is correct in stating that he has accurately presented the need for innovative programmes without compromising quality, covering challenges of children at risk, problems and prospects for HCD in South Asia. I believe that his inputs, especially with respect to needs and applications, can be utilized as a model for the rest of the world, including South Africa. He would like to see the HCD programmes answer the following questions:

- How can we ignore the problems of children?
- How can we have God's heart for children?
- How can we build better future generations?
- What is the role of Theological Education and Institutions?

Dr. Wess Stafford (2010:127-159) is an internationally recognized advocate for children and the president for Compassion International. In his book "Too Small to Ignore", he shares about his life in Africa as a missionary child in the Ivory Coast, from where he was sent away to be 'cared for' by ex-missionaries for nine months of each year as prescribed by the mission's board. Instead of being given holistic care, he and the other missionary children were seriously mistreated, i.e., abused both physically and psychologically, and were intimidated into fearful silence even before their parents. This abuse went on for many years, damaging the children, and for him it was from age six! Stafford had brought the abuse out into the open, even as a child at age nine, when he tearfully begged his parents not to send him back to the mission school.

When the teachers heard of his complaint he was subsequently terrorized by them on his return to the 'Bambulo' Mission School. The worst incident occurred when a Mr Edwards punished him for telling his mother about the cruelty of the staff by telling him that he was 'Satan's favourite tool', and that he could not serve Satan and God simultaneously because he would be 'burnt'. He made Stafford hold a candle where the wick was exposed at both ends, burning until the flames burnt his hand. As a matter of principle He would not let it go, knowing that he had done the right thing. His skin was eventually bubbling with the burn. A child came forward and dashed it from his hand, a turning point in the minds of the children; enough was enough—seeing the evil of this man!

Stafford (2010: 157-164) comments concerning the damage caused by the teachers, mainly through corporal punishment with heavy leather belts and other 'hurting weapons', for example, a truck tyre sandal and even 'rubbing the backs' of girls at night in their dormitory beds, turned many children against God. Thirty five years later at the hearing where they were called together by the mission's board to testify against the teachers who perpetrated these terrors for the children, the evidence of the spiritual damage was confirmed when only a handful attended the church service at the venue; many had rejected God.

What led to the hearing? Stafford (2010: 157–164) relates that three decades after his damaged childhood, when he became president of Compassion International, he received a letter from one of his Bambulo Christian Academy classmate friends, now a pastor in Illinois. He poured out his agony of spirit that he had not been able to recover from his childhood experiences at boarding school even over all those years. He told of many other mutual classmates who were still living lives of distress, unable to leave behind their hurtful past. They had been communicating with each other, sharing essays, poems and memories. The pastor informed Stafford that even after the academy had been closed for twenty years, they were still angry and damaged, to the point of organizing a class-action suit against these 'criminals' who ran the mission boarding school. They remembered the incident where he had been willing to hold his birthday candle until it burnt him, and so they felt that he would be a good person to champion the cause.

Why use this story to show a global perspective of holistic child development? It is when analysing the hurts of these adults and the fact that even though he had decided at age sixteen to forgive these boarding school terrorising adults, and even though his help from the Lord had been there through the years, yet as an adult he was still trying to hide the memories, and the sudden realization that he was still desperately hurting after thirty five years, that we see the damage that can affect a person's entire life. He suffered abuse, both physical and emotional, forced neglect by the parents through the mission board insisting that the children be away from home for nine months of the year. The interlacing of memories of hurt and the ability to trust and have meaningful relationships thereafter are all sadly interwoven into holistic damage!

The media had received some stories from the classmates and had actually blamed the children for being abnormal. This finally convinced Stafford to call for a hearing.

Stafford recounts (2010:157–164) that the original leaders at the mission, the Stabers, were not in the least sorry for their wicked past, in fact they accused him of lying! He cried bitterly after the hearing, an emotional release partially out of anger at the lack of admission of guilt or repentance by the elderly couple, and partially because he was willing to deal with it openly. Then, for the first time in their marriage, he shared properly with his wife about the hardships he and his peers experienced and he cried again. She read their letters and helped him grieve over the past, which was necessary to do.

Stafford (2010:157-164) recounts how he then organised to meet his denominational leader and mission's board leader to report personally of the Bambulo days. They had never before met, and so were shocked to realise the seriousness of the case.

The next major emotional upset, as recounted by Stafford (2010:260-261), was the unexpected level of heart-ache suddenly overwhelming him at the American Association of Christian Counsellors Convention in Dallas, where he had to deliver a key-note address. He could hardly speak his hurt was so deep. He started with a joke, and halfway through, his 'heart just broke'. 'I have an important talk for you today, but I'm not sure I can deliver it. I am a suffering, hurting person today'. Through his tears he told them of the story of Bambulo and the previous day's testimony. When he recalled how those who had abused him had repeatedly accused him of lying, he

stopped, hung his head, and gave way to tears and sobs. There was silence while he tried to compose himself, and then a woman called out, 'I believe you!' This was followed by another and then the audience, standing and shouting out, 'we believe you!' The whole convention actually ministered to the speaker. Dr Gary Collins came up and prayed a prayer of comfort for him. He recounts that this was a precious moment. He then went on praising God, saying that he had gone thirty five years with a broken heart with never a single hour of counselling. That morning, for the first time he had spoken publically of it and had been overwhelmed by grief, and God had provided two thousand four hundred counsellors! The audience cheered. Their hearts had longed to counsel and they had done so when least expected. Years later there are still letters of response of this moment being a profound turning point in the ministry of many.

Holistic Child Development requires a process of dealing with hurts and therapy for recovery. Stafford had several emotional releases after all the years of pent-up hurt. This was necessary for restoration, even after thirty five years! He needed to grieve over these childhood atrocities and destroyed lives of his childhood friends. But God...! Today Stafford is a world-renowned advocate for children—he speaks for those who cannot speak for themselves.

I quote from Stafford (2010:back cover), 'Children are victimized by war, pornography and prostitution, as well as by lack of funding, feeding, educating and protecting. Yet, in a few short years, the world's challenges will be theirs to manage. Now is the time to act on their behalf and invest in children...because they are Too Small to Ignore.'

Stafford is ideally placed to describe the global picture as he is involved with Compassion International on a global level. He reflects that sadly the church cannot claim exemption from the abuse and neglect of children. He notes that the church may have avoided overt sins of commission (though not always), but are often guilty of covert sins of omission. He cites the lack of children's conferences or parts of conference programmes dedicated to children.

It is clear that children are often not noticed or considered as important—even within the church. Budgets, time constraints and church programmes indicate that this is the case and that the adults receive first consideration. The church is also extremely

introspective, considering the child only on Sundays and in a spiritual training recipient mindset, not as a child who needs nurture during the week as well, in a holistic sense.

In Stafford's stories of his childhood in West Africa, I see great principles of holistic approaches of society, typical of Africa. In a positive sense, the well-being of the child is everyone's responsibility, neighbours, people at the opposite end of the village. There is a great spirit of 'Ubuntu'-being the 'brother's keeper', always sharing food and celebrating together though also grieving together. There are serious negative connotations as well. These include spiritist, animist, ancestral practices and stories, as well as inappropriate discipline measured out by people who are not close to the family. Therefore, as much as he enjoyed being there, godly parents, a precious family life for those short times each year before he and his sister, Carol, were sent off to boarding school, the cultural environment was difficult to handle. It is only by God's grace that Stafford grew up with tremendous wisdom, compassion and concern especially for children who are not appreciated and given the opportunity to grow up as God would have them grow.

As a statement of what Compassion International would see as necessary components of Holistic Child Development, Stafford (2007:31) lists some of the most important things to give a needy child (from basic to ultimate objectives). These include the following:

- Food each school day (which he concedes is often taken home to share with the family);
- Inoculation against major diseases;
- Health screening and treatment where necessary;
- Education;
- An introduction to Jesus (he reminds us that He will love them for a life-time); and
- An exposure to possible vocations so they have a route to productivity.

As does Brewster (2010:62), Stafford (2007:176–184) points out the dangers of ‘welfare’ as opposed to teaching the poor to become productive themselves. The way in which help is given is crucial. If handled the wrong way, for example, a huge financial gift, the result is counter-productivity. A family can lose dignity (especially if the gift is the equivalent of what a father earns in a year). The family can become confused. The ideal, he argues, would be to spread out the gift as a sponsorship over time for several children.

Stafford (2007:235–237) urges the church to challenge governments and cultures to be accountable for the welfare of the youngest and most vulnerable citizens. For this to happen, the church and mission leaders need to grasp the significance of elevating children as a priority. He therefore challenges seminaries and training institutions to formulate a powerful children’s ministry theology, and to support those overtly involved in children’s ministry initiatives.

We, as teachers, always seem to come with an agenda of exactly what we want to give children, without allowing them the space to relate to us and connect with us, especially in their favourite languages of communication, that is, stories and games. We, as adults, fail to see the potential in each child and the way in which God can use him/her in dynamic Kingdom transformation.

In this connection, White (2009:152), the leader of the Child Theology Movement, gives some profound advice. As a carer of orphans for over sixteen years, he says, ‘Children have been all but invisible in theology, in its formal sense. The assumption has been that theology is an adult pursuit, and children are given baby food versions!’. He suggests that we need to ‘unlearn’ the adult structures and to place the child in the centre of the way in which church is done and with the teaching of Jesus the starting point of theology. ‘We need to redefine the core and margins of the church...always reforming. And the core is clearly identified in the scriptures: widows, orphans, strangers and the “little ones”’. White (160) also confirms that those scholars who have studied systematic theology with a child in mind find that children are usually marginal, if not invisible, in literature thus far. He challenges his readers that these inadequacies need to be addressed, especially as children were of major importance to Jesus Himself.

Marcia Bunge (2009:120 and 98), Professor of Humanities and Theology at Christ College, Valparaiso University, has a term she uses regularly, 'The child in the midst'. Her comments are thought-provoking and challenging. If one envisages concentric circles with the caption 'Child in the midst' at the centre, it is easy to see that there would be huge ramifications if that child could be involved in all spheres of life...to be noticed and included. Her second circle shows family, school, peers, church and neighbourhood. The outer circle shows the influencing powers on the child: 'Our understanding of the child in the midst does not mean a child in isolation but rather a child in the midst of tremendous activity and relationships and in the context of the influencing powers of politics health systems, policy, law and culture.'

Bunge's (2009:120) comments on the impact on the church are also profound: 'When we consider children in the kingdom and the place of the church, we almost need to get the church out of the way just like the Pharisees and the disciples needed to get out of the way.'

The following questions which she raises, are important to consider when addressing a child's development in a holistic and satisfactory manner:

1. Is the child being raised with love and affection, receiving a good education, safe at home and at school, being exposed to good role models?
2. Will the child have a sense of meaning and purpose in life, contribute positively to society?
3. In the church we ask if the child will have faith, and live out that faith in service and compassion toward others.

Bunge (2009:99) acknowledges that many countries fail to meet even the basic needs of children, and children world-wide suffer hunger, poverty, abuse, neglect and depression. Many children attend inadequate and dangerous schools without solid pre-school programmes. Even in the USA children are one of the last priorities in decisions about budget cuts. 'Road maintenance and military budgets take precedence over our children', she notes.

As we consider children in crisis and especially abuse as one of the major causes (the other being various types of neglect), Bunge rightly refers to the child sexual abuse cases within the Roman Catholic Church as shocking, not just because of the abuse of children, but also by the ways in which financial concerns, careers and reputations of the clergy hierarchy took precedence over the safety and needs of the children. She also mentions other more subtle ways in which the church shows lack of commitment to children, and I believe that these are common to all societies:

- Poor quality development programmes,
- failure of parents to inculcate the faith,
- the spiritual formation of children being under-valued,
- failure of churches to be public advocates for children (needing justice and compassion), and
- simplistic views of children (without seeing their potential as the Bible shows in many instances-God's choice to use a child above an adult to accomplish His purposes).

Stafford (2007:2) cites an instance when D L Moody told his wife that there were two-and-a-half converts from a meeting and when she asked the age of the child, her husband replied that 'the half' was the adult because he only had half a life-time left.

A Global Holistic Child Development survey does well to look at some of the contributions made by distinguished experts from different countries as portrayed in UNICEF's (2009:1–33) special edition *State of the World's Children 2009*, from within UNICEF, and without Important contributions for country panels were received from the following UNICEF field offices: China, Egypt, India, Mexico, Mozambique, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sweden. Input was also received from UNICEF regional offices and the Innocenti Research Centre.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, The State of the World's Children invited contributors from a variety of stakeholder groups to give their perspective on what the Convention means to them and what they consider to be

some of the critical issues it faces in the 21st century. Some of the contributors were: Jacques Barrot, Ishmael Beah, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Om Prakash Gurjar, Yanghee Lee, Louis Michel, Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo, Hanna Polak, Marjorie Scardino, Timothy P. Shriver, Javier Solana, Tan Sri Dato, Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin, Andrés Velasco. Their essays represent a selection of those available at the time of going to press in mid-2009. The full series of perspectives is available at [www.unicef.org/rightsite](http://www.unicef.org/rightsite).

Since 20th November 1989, when world leaders adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the UN General Assembly (2009:74), the treaty has been adopted by the world as a major significant guide to the rights of a child. Clearly this shows the common understanding among communities and countries that children have the right to survive and develop, to be protected from abuse, violence, and exploitation. It also advocates that their views be respected and actions concerning children be taken in their best interests. The fundamental ethos is that meeting children's rights is vital for their development and well-being, it is also pivotal to creating the world envisioned by the Millennium Declaration—one of peace, security, equity, respect for the environment and shared responsibility where children can thrive.

The UNICEF (2009:1) booklet, 'The State of the World's children'— special edition, gives a realistic view of the current situation regarding children worldwide. It is clear that there has been much endeavour to help children in many spheres. Ann M. Veneman, the Executive Director of UNICEF, gives some examples of the huge strides made since 1989 to improve the services for children. For example, the annual number of under-five deaths has fallen from around 12.5 million in 1990 to less than 9 million in 2008. Between 1990 and 2006, 1.6 billion people worldwide gained access to improved water sources. Globally, around 84 per cent of primary-school-age children are attending school, and gender gaps in primary-school enrolment are shrinking across the developing world.

The fight against the AIDS pandemic is intensifying and yielding results, with steady increases in the number of pregnant women with HIV receiving antiretroviral drugs to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus. Growing numbers of newborns and infants are being tested and are thereafter also receiving the full course of medication

to protect them from HIV. Advances in child protection and their invitation to attend more meetings and to participate in discussion concerning their well-being, has also increased, though not significantly as far as tabled results are concerned.

Since 1989, around seventy countries have incorporated children's codes into national legislation based on the Convention's provisions. Since the mid-1990's, international household surveys have started to provide regular estimates of several important protection issues, such as child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, and, more recently, attitudes towards child discipline and domestic violence (UNICEF 2009:24). Now, paradigms such as the 'protective environment' are providing a firm basis for national child-protection systems. Advocacy on child protection issues has increased significantly. On two key issues—children in armed conflict and violence against children—the naming of UN special representatives has confirmed that increased attention and determined effort.

Millions of children still remain without the essential services to help ensure their survival, reduce the resultant diseases and malnutrition. They need to be given access to improved water and sanitation, and enabled to receive quality education.

Many children live in unsafe unprotected environments and so are vulnerable in terms of neglect, violence, abuse, exploitation and are often discriminated against (budgets often show neglect of children- adult agendas often receive priority) .

The problem of violence against children is particularly alarming, with between 500 million and 1.5 billion children estimated to experience violence annually, resulting in many child victims experiencing long-standing physical and mental health difficulties later in life (UNICEF 2009:ii). These factors are stressed in Veneman's keynote foreword in 'The State of the World's Children'.

Africa and Asia, and especially the regions of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, have the greatest concentrations of absolute deprivations of child rights which need to be addressed. All countries and regions need to tackle the increasingly apparent disparities among economic and social groups in accessing help in the areas of children's health, protection and education according to UNICEF (2009:ii).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Treaty, will have to reinforce the gains in child rights of the past, address present problems and future challenges of the future, and practically ensure 'grassroots' help. This will be even more important in times of global recession and natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis and their resultant effects: starvation and other hardships. UNICEF (2009:ii) states that children and young people are most at risk, with almost 45 per cent of the world's population currently under the age of 25. There is mounting concern about climate change and its impact on health, water security and food production. Many violent clashes involve a struggle for resources—and will do so due to increased competition for resources as populations increase; access to vital services may be more challenging and the income inequalities cause further hardship for the poor.

Veneman (2009:ii) challenges us to unite in order to meet the challenges. She refers to the need to 'invest' and 'collaborate' with women and children being major partners. She points out that investing in child rights is a responsibility as poverty, under-nutrition and other deprivations undermine children's abilities to develop to their full potential. It is an opportunity because the gains of children receiving better nutrition, primary health care, education and protection, will be greater and more long-term in benefit than in almost any other area of development.

UNICEF (2009:ii) underlines the importance of broad, global collaboration, in implementing the Convention's principles and the rights it prescribes. 'Collaboration in health, education, protection and participation at international and national levels have expanded in recent years, offering the promise of accelerated progress on child rights and towards internationally agreed development goals', Veneman endorses the fact that children must be key players themselves as their participation empowers them in their own development and protection. She cites initiatives such as the 2002 UN Special Session on Children, the annual Junior 8 meetings (concurrent with the G-8 summits), as well as numerous child-friendly cities' programmes, as showing the benefits of respecting and encouraging the views and participation of children in decision-making forums. She goes on to show that the benefits of educating and empowering women by involving them in the decision-making process in the home, workplace and political sphere, produces a double dividend, in 'fulfilling the rights of women' and also helping to save and improve the lives of children. Where women are

secure from violence, exploitation and discrimination, children and families benefit. 'Both boys and girls are more likely to have access to adequate nutrition, quality health care and education; girls are also more likely to delay marriage and enjoy greater opportunities for development and growth. Educating girls and ensuring their protection and participation is therefore of pivotal importance to the child rights' agenda.' states Veneman. As Executive Director of UNICEF, she challenges the world, for the next twenty years, to build on the progress achieved thus far, working together to reach those children who are still being denied their rights to survival, development, participation and protection.

It is clear that The Convention on the Rights of the Child document stands as a global standard for building a better world for children, where their best interests are a primary concern of all. Some of these global 'rights' of children encompass the following aspects: Respect for the views of the child: Children have a right to have their views heard and respected in matters concerning them—according to their age and maturity. There are several provisions for this, one of the most important of which is article 12, which holds that States parties 'shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.' Article 12 places an obligation on government to ensure that children's views are sought and considered. This principle also applies in any proceedings affecting them.

UNICEF refers to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (2009:9) as allowing certain civil freedoms for children including freedom of expression (article 13), thought and religion (14), association and assembly (15) and access to information (17). These 'participation rights' have spurred greater inclusion of children's voices in development efforts that affect them, from local projects such as peer education and the construction of child-friendly schools to international children's congresses, interventions before parliaments or the UN General Assembly, and dialogue with world leaders at the G8 Summits. Children's participation has also influenced such key processes as the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children. The Convention has influenced much national and international legislation through the years. It is seen in the increased usage of 'child rights'

language in legal documents, advocacy, policies, human rights and development programmes, and in the media. The rights of children are not always specified in national constitutions or in legislation—often because these documents were written long before the 1989 Convention document was released. In some countries ratified international treaties such as the Convention take precedence over domestic law. In others, there are specific references not just to children’s care and protection but to child rights. These range from extremely detailed recognition of child rights (for example, Brazil) to relatively brief acknowledgements (for example, Thailand).

The Convention has been directly incorporated into national law across the world. A recent UNICEF study (2009:9) shows that two thirds of the 52 countries reviewed had included children’s ombudspersons or commissioners, or established child rights focal points within national human rights commissions or ombudspersons offices. It employs the general measures of implementation as a practical guide in making specific recommendations to States and expects them to describe action to take in response to the maximum extent of their available resources.

Also, since 1989, one third of the countries studied had also integrated the Convention into their national constitutions, most having attempted to bring their legislation into conformity with the Convention by adopting child rights codes or through the gradual, systematic reform of existing law, or both. This has led to some significant examples of positive change. For example, legislation on child protection in Nigeria and Indonesia reflects the Convention’s principles. The Convention reflects in the new children’s codes adopted by countries including Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Romania and Ukraine according to UNICEF (2009:11).

I can affirm continually, that I can see that The Convention’s principles are excellent—children are theoretically given excellent rights, but theory and praxis are not always aligned. Yes, holistic child development and care are on the world’s agenda, but the inherent selfishness of mankind interferes with the implementation of these child rights.

There is constant recognition given to the fact that the success of legislation depends on changes in societal attitudes, practices and enforcement, as well as sound

principles and provisions promoting children's rights. Children are so often the victims of harmful cultural attitudes and social traditions passed on through the generations. Simply passing a law is therefore not enough. There needs to be ongoing advocacy and awareness. This requires many and varied initiatives to educate, both adults and children. It required many organizations 'getting on board' collaborating and supplying sufficient resources. It involves parties involved with children, including children themselves as full participants. This particularly applies when it comes to protecting children from abuse, violence and exploitation. UNICEF (2009:11) elaborates on the example of inhumane treatment of women, including young women, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). This practice is forbidden by law, and comprehensive campaigns within practising communities have made headway towards abandoning this practice. All levels of society need to be involved for a successful abandonment of this practice as it is so deeply entrenched in the culture. Even legislation, understanding about the practice of violating human rights, and information about the negative health has not proved to be sufficient for communities to abandon FGM/C. Social pressure to conform to community norms, even among those parents who are aware of the health risks, collective agreement to abandon the practice by a significant number of families is essential.

The UNICEF document evidences that much must be done in praxis to realize children's rights to nutrition, health and family care, nutrition, education and protection. According to their website, UNICEF has reported on these topics annually in *The State of the World's Children* for several years, beginning reports on attitudes towards domestic violence, child discipline and children with disabilities in 2007. Data on such topics as sexual exploitation and abuse of children, trafficking, migration, children in institutional care and children in justice centres is difficult to collect through household surveys; there is often a lack of quantifiable data on these topics. According to a UNICEF 'Child Rights Paper' produced in 2009 (2009:24), there is more external analysis and best estimate measurements at the time of publication. While qualitative data cannot substitute for statistics, they are nonetheless an important supplement to quantitative information and essential for programming in the best interests of the child.

Despite recommendations made in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, observations listed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children, there are inconsistencies, namely, no final definition of child protection, a lack of mandatory data and the frequent 'invisibility' of the phenomena. Much has been accomplished towards rectifying these problems through Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) since the mid-1980s, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) since 1995 and other national household surveys. These instruments, according to UNICEF (2009:24), provide quantitative data topics which include birth registration, child marriage, FGM/C, child labour, and, more recently, attitudes towards domestic violence, child discipline and disabled children.

DHS MICS and other national household surveys are the sources for much of the data presented in this report card. Data on birth registration, child marriage and child labour are collected for most countries, while data on FGM/C is available for the 29 countries in which it is widely practised.

Registration of a child's birth is a vital step towards his or her protection. UNICEF (2009:24) state that any enforcement of minimum-age legislation depends on an official record of a child's age, whether it is to protect the child from premature marriage or from dangerous forms of work or illegal recruitment for armed combat.

In UNICEF's (2009:21) record of children in conflict with the law need an official record of their age if they are to avoid being treated as adults by the criminal justice system. In this regard, Egypt has adopted legislation to prevent codes applied to adult and child justice. Children with birth certificates are less vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking, and those caught up in complex emergency situations are more likely to be reunited with their families. Also, a birth record acknowledges parentage that can often guard against illegal adoption. Integrating birth registration into health services and early child development programmes, as well as awareness campaigns, can increase registration rates. Articles 20 and 21 on the Convention of Child Rights show the strict legal codes for adoption as is described in the Progress for Children Report (2009:17).

There are a tremendous number of deprivations that can be mentioned, but this study is concentrating on the affects of abuse and neglect in the life of a child. This affects the child holistically as the emotional well-being and physical well-being are continually connected. In socio-economic areas of intense deprivation the social protection systems are usually underdeveloped or malfunction anyway.

In 2008, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of a Child, passed particular recommendations on sexual exploitation and abuse, as reflected in Numbers 73 to 76. It welcomed the announced forthcoming ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and noted the numerous activities undertaken by the ruling political party to combat commercial sexual exploitation and abuse. This included measures to prevent criminalization of child victims and to implement policies outlined in the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The Committee expressed concern at the lack of data on children as victims of sexual exploitation, including in the Overseas Territories, especially as victims in need of recovery and reintegration and not as offenders. The Committee also recommended that the State party ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, Sale, trafficking and abduction, and thus recommended that the State party intensify its efforts to collect data on the extent of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, essential to prepare adequate responses to and to combat these phenomena, including in the Overseas Territories. The committee recommended that the State ruling party should always consider, both in legislation and in practice, child victims of these criminal practices. This would include child prostitution.

The Committee was pleased that the State would ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Their review of the United Kingdom Anti-trafficking Action Plan was that it was good in essence, but that it may be unrealistic as the necessary resources to implement it were not being provided, including those needed to ensure the provision of high quality services and safe accommodation for trafficked children. Thus, the Committee recommended that the State party provide the necessary resources for an effective implementation of the Anti-trafficking Action Plan and that the State party ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and implement its

obligations by ensuring that child protection standards for trafficked children meet international standards.

This document shows that Africa and Asia present the largest global challenges for survival, development and protection. For example, the rate of child marriage is much higher in these two regions than any other, at 46 per cent for South Asia and 39 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa; also, the births of two out of every three children go unregistered.

As the 20th century progressed, there were growing concerns about what was described by UNICEF (2009:21) in the mid-1980s and 1990s as ‘children in especially difficult circumstances’—homeless, orphaned, living and working on the streets, affected by conflict and disabilities, or suffering from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. It was increasingly understood that these children faced a range of rights violations that would be best served dealing with as a whole. The Convention paved the way for the consolidation of child protection as a holistic concept. It offers children a protective environment from a broad spectrum of violence, discrimination and exploitation, because all children—whether from industrialized countries or developing countries, from rich or poor communities, in situations of peace and security or conflict and emergency—need protection from neglect and abuse.

Children’s right to protection according to UNICEF (2009:20–28), has two excellent ‘Optional Protocols’ added to the Convention in 2000: on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. Other international human rights instruments, such the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), have also added useful structures to reinforce children’s right to protection. The International Labour Organization’s conventions on the minimum age for admission to employment (no. 138) and on elimination of the worst forms of child labour (no. 182) added excellent child protection policies. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption; and the Convention on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities have all added vital and useful child protection controls as was tabled by UNICEF (2009:21).

At this point of the study, it is already clear that outstanding world-wide protection mechanisms are in place. It is clear therefore, that their implementation is the problem. This is ratified by the UNICEF (2009:21) statement 'Protection risks for children are numerous and complex'. These violations (violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination), in every country and community, cultural, social or economic group, are not properly recognized and are also not reported as they should be. This undermines all the protection rights that have been put in place. They also threaten the survival and development of victims of child abuse. Unfortunately it is usually the children in situations of poverty that are violated, do not have opportunity to speak about their abuse and are simultaneously lacking essential goods and services such as, a decent standard of living, family environment, education or identification documents.

Some of the greatest challenges revolve around the fact that most child protection violations are hard to measure and monitor. Sometimes cultural practices condone these practices. Political sensitivities can also compromise children's safety—in areas such as child labour, sexual exploitation and corporal punishment, with insufficient indicators and definitions and especially ways of apprehending and detaining perpetrators of abuses against children. The shame and stigma attached to violations also hinders the reporting of abuses world-wide. It is therefore extremely difficult to be accurate in assessing the scale of child protection violations. Often, children are afraid to report when there has been violence, abuse or exploitation against them states the UNICEF report (2009:24). Also children, if the abusers are family members, still love them, and want to protect them despite their abusive behaviour!

According to the UNICEF 'State of the World's Children-special edition'(2009:21), Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), along with improved national monitoring, and UNICEF publications such as Progress for Children: A report card on child protection, also published in 2009, have helped bring child protection into sharper focus by providing regular estimates for key indicators such as birth registration, child marriage, child labour, female genital

mutilation/ cutting and, recent research on attitudes towards domestic violence, child discipline and child disability. Much research is still needed so the statistics are estimates, a rough and partial representation of the scope of violations against children's right to protection (24). Violence may affect between 500 million and 1.5 billion children. 150 million children aged 5–14 are estimated to be involved in child labour. In excess of 70 million women and girls aged 15–49 in 29 countries have been subjected to female genital mutilation/cutting (24).

Although birth registration and recognition of citizenship by the State is crucial to the realization of child rights, over 50 million children are not registered at birth. More than 64 million women aged 20–24 in the developing world were married or in union before age 18. According to UNICEF (2009:24), more than 1 billion children are estimated to live in countries or territories affected by armed conflict; of these, around 300 million are under age five. Although there is evidence of some progress—declining incidence of FGM/C—the pace of these improvements is slow.

Extreme poverty is associated with higher levels of child marriage, child labour and exploitation. The risks for HIV infection among girls and women are likely to increase where poverty is greatest as is promiscuous behaviour especially prostitution. In conflict-affected countries there is the risk of children being exploited, exposed to violence and recruitment by armed groups. Other statistics quoted in the UNICEF 'State of the World's Children' Special 2009 release quotes some other shocking statistics though very plausible when one thinks of the susceptibility of vulnerable children (pp.1–92). In Adolescents Factsheet: State of World Population 2005 - UNFP United Nations Population Fund), the statistic of 14 million young women world-wide, giving birth between the ages of 15 and 19 years old, was listed. The comment was made that it is not surprising that many of these young women either die in child-birth or are internally damaged and may never be able to bare another child.

Disparities in child protection are directly related to: region or continent, geographical location, ethnicity, disability, gender and income. For example, children from the poorest households are twice as likely to be unregistered at birth as those from the richest families. A girl from a rural household in the developing countries of Eastern

and Southern Africa is twice as likely to be married before age 18 as her urban counterpart. Studies show that girls in rural areas are engaged in agricultural labour at an earlier age than boys, and they are more often abused and exploited, although boys are also affected stated UNICEF (2009:25).

Violence, child labour and trafficking are also of particular concern in industrialized countries. UNICEF (2009:25) cites a recent review of studies on child maltreatment published in *The Lancet* reveals that at least 4 per cent of children in industrialized countries are physically abused each year, and 1 in every 10 is neglected or psychologically abused. About 5–10 per cent of girls and up to 5 per cent of boys are estimated to have suffered penetrative sexual abuse over the course of their childhood; and those being subjected to any form of sexual abuse could be as much as three times higher. Abused children are at greater risk of experiencing a range of difficulties, including mental health issues, low education achievement, substance abuse, relationship problems and the possibility of they themselves perpetrating violence later in life.

Migrant children, particularly those belonging to families without documentation or who have migrated illegally, may be at greater risk of exploitation such as trafficking. Lacking support services, children of immigrants and other marginalized populations may be less likely to be registered at birth or to have access to essential services and legal recourse to justice to protect their rights. Children who are vulnerable to protection violations may also experience responses and actions that exacerbate these threats. Children who come into conflict with the law also face protection risks, particularly violence, at every stage of contact with justice systems. Child victims of and witnesses to human-rights abuses often lack the support of skilled professionals and sensitive procedures states UNICEF (2009:25).

In considering global unity of protection rights according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF (2009:30) states that every child has the right to protection from Illicit transfers and illegal adoption, violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, armed conflict, child labour, trafficking, sexual and other forms of exploitation, and drug abuse, torture and deprivation of liberty, and capital punishment. Furthermore, the Convention assures special protection, care for and assistance to

children who are deprived of the family environment, disabled or helped if they are in conflict with the law.

Also included in the Convention on the Rights of the Child is an extremely worthwhile guideline for all countries concerning the need to 'Enable a protective environment for children in emergencies' cited by UNICEF (2009:30). Acknowledgement is given to the fact that this requires an integrated approach as it is complex together reduce children's vulnerability. It involves essential services, social welfare, and agencies entrusted with law enforcement and justice especially regarding human rights violations against children. A strong statement is made about the necessity for countries to respect the national and international legislation and commitments to protecting children caught up in emergencies, especially those involved in armed conflict. They aim to allow children as far as possible to access information, advice and services that can protect them, building this protective environment, which is realized through an interconnected and holistic system of legislation, policies, regulations and services aimed at presenting and responding to protection-related risks.

According to UNICEF (2009:30), child protection systems should always encompass services, partnerships, procedures and policies that protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation, providing recourse to justice and rehabilitation when violations of these rights occur. Vital services include tackling poverty, support and educating parents and other family members, prioritizing physical safety, facilitating early detection and reporting of abuses, protecting children's rights when they come into conflict with the law and contact with alternative care, and ensuring that children's right to an identity is met. If they have these services such as health and education, then the protection is also less difficult to implement. Their rights to survive, develop, participate and to be protected, are interrelated. Education is particularly important as it provides a safe space and an essential point of contact with teachers who can assess children's mental and physical conditions daily. Also, it also increases students' life skills and knowledge, making them better able to avoid risky situations and protect themselves.

Ann Veneman (executive secretary of UNICEF) referred to studies from Innocenti research (2009:ii). She affirms that the true extent of violence against children is impossible to measure because so much of it happens in secret and is not reported. She suggests that probably the broadest assessment of this statement is the data on physical violence compiled by the Innocenti Research Centre for the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children, which led to an estimate of between 500 million and 1.5 billion children experiencing violence annually.

Of particular note concerning violence perpetrated against children is the final statement of the children delegates who attended the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Children's Consultation: United Nations Secretary General's study on Violence against Children held from 18 to 20 July 2005, Kopanong, South Africa. According to the UNICEF website, these children affirm the violence they suffer and who made collective statements of their recommendations as tabled in the 'Kapaya Statement' emanating from their discussions.

Hanna Polak, a Russian film-maker who initiated a large charity organization called 'Active Child Aid' cited by UNICEF (2009:42), affirms that most violence against children is carried out by people children know and should be able to trust.

The Progress for Children Report Card on Child Protection Number 8 September 2009 elaborates on all types of child violence, and especially that perpetrated by people children love and trust. These people would include parents, stepparents or parents' partners, schoolmates, teachers and employers. According to UNICEF (2009:47) certain groups of children are particularly vulnerable, including children with disabilities (19), children belonging to minority groups, children living on the streets, adolescents in conflict with the law, and refugee and displaced children (47). Often children who face violence or witness it remain silent out of fear and stigma, and many children accept violence as an inevitable part of life (24).

Although the family should be the natural environment for protection of children, the home can also be a place where children experience violence in the form of discipline. Data from 37 countries that carried out an optional module on child discipline during the third round of Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (2005–2006) show that 86 per cent of children 2–14 years old experience physical punishment and/or psychological

Two out of three children are subject to physical punishment. Physical punishment is a widespread practice even where it is not approved by mothers or caregivers. In 35 countries with available data, the percentage of mothers or caregivers who think physical punishment is necessary to raise a child is consistently lower than the percentage of children 2–14 years old who are actually subjected to such discipline.

The MICS module on child-discipline was developed in response to the lack of empirical evidence and analysis on which to develop policies, programmes and interventions for preventing violence against children and supporting children who experience violence. But more evidence is clearly needed. Available data also indicates widespread acceptance of wife-beating, a form of domestic violence. Data from 68 countries indicates that more than 50 per cent of girls and women 15–49 years old think that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances. More than half the women in developing countries with data think that wife-beating is acceptable. Estimates are based on data for 68 countries representing 39% of the world population. Regional estimates for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa could not be calculated due to insufficient data.

In referring to the least developed countries, 64 developing countries (excluding China), neglect of children was the most commonly cited reason for justifying wife-beating across almost all regions. Women with more education, however, are less likely to believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife under certain circumstances than women with less education.

The UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children recommended improved systems for the improvement of the collection of national data and information (with international standard quality control) and a better way of the monitoring of progress over time with special emphasis on identifying sub-groups of vulnerable. Among other recommendations, the study also called for development of national research agendas on violence against children across all settings where it occurs—in the family and home, at school, in justice and care institutions, at workplaces and in the community.

The UN Secretary General pointed to the ramifications of violence. Consequences in the lives of victims are holistic in that violence affects every area of their lives. Many

victims experience physical and mental health problems later in life, which may even lead to disability and death. Society actually ends up paying the price in terms of protective and welfare costs, medical costs, lost earnings and loss of taxes.

Studies conducted by MICS, DHS and other national surveys between 2005 and 2007 are encapsulated in the UN secretary's report recording the high proportions of children (ages 2–14) experiencing physical punishment and/ psychological aggression.

The Report Card on Child Protection studies child neglect says that in most regions, neglect of children is the most commonly cited justification for wife-beating. Many of the women who suffer this way, according to a survey of women between age 15 and 49, concede to the fact that 'a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances'. For example, reasons include neglecting the children, going out without telling her husband, arguing with him, refusing sex with him or if she burns the food for his dinner.

In terms of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children (2006) mentions the major challenge of ascertaining reliable numbers for children and adolescents subjected to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The reason for this lack of data is the clandestine nature of these crimes, making them under-recognized and under-reported. It is probable, however, that the figures encompass millions, and that girls and boys of all ages and backgrounds and in every region of the world may be victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. Studies show that girls are more often abused and exploited, although boys are also affected.

The longer-term consequences, together with the trauma of sexual exploitation itself, is that these children ('child survivors') often do not attend school and are at risk of physical injury, receiving sexually-transmitted infections and the HIV virus. Adolescent girls often fall pregnant, and this is unwanted pregnancy.

According to the records captured in UNICEF's 'Progress Report Card on Child Protection (Number 8 2009), as of May 2009, 131 countries had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child

Prostitution and Child Pornography. This Protocol criminalizes all forms of sexual exploitation of children, emphasizing support to children who are victims.

In 2008, Brazil hosted the World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. About three thousand participants from more than 125 countries gathered at this congress, which focussed on how to protect children from various types of sexual exploitation, such as child marriage, the commercial sex industry, child pornography and the sexual exploitation of children on the internet. Among the opening speakers were Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman, who reminded those in attendance that sexual exploitation is a way to assert control over others, often by men against women and children. She also noted that men need to be a big part of the solution. Earlier in the day, Veneman had met with children from Brazil a group of children from all over the world, who are fighting sexual exploitation in their own countries.

This congress was highly successful in its global representation and in its outstanding suggestions for ways in which to tackle this problem, especially in protection and remediation for children and adolescents in the fields of trafficking, pornography, prostitution, rape and abuse. The systematic tabling of problems and suggested solutions, including those from children and adolescents makes this an extremely accurate representation of the global understanding of the problem of sexual exploitation as well as suggested strategies of alleviation. Brazil's President Lula said in his opening speech, 'The importance of educating children about sexual exploitation is as important an obligation as it is to give food every day to the children so they can survive.'

Of great concern is the document's reference to the fact that sexual exploitation may be increasing. According to UNICEF's website,

There is also growing evidence of criminal activity related to the trafficking of children for sexual purposes and the proliferation of exploitative imagery and other internet-related crimes. The sexual exploitation of children is fuelled by international demand, which threatens children and adolescents of all ages, in every corner of the world. The driving force behind the third World Congress is to make the global response more emphatic and

comprehensive as this problem continues to become more complex in its manifestations and scope.

UNICEF was the key organizer of the Congress, but was joined particularly by End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT), and UNICEF and the non-governmental organization Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Brazilian Government, UNICEF and other partners involved in the Congress saw this congress as being practical, solution-driven and innovative, an opportunity to broaden alliances, to address new challenges and to promote international cooperation for more effective prevention and response to sexual exploitation.

Five panels dealt with identifying forms of commercial exploitation, developed a legal framework, adapting policies to address these issues and to strengthen forms of international cooperation. The event resulted in setting important goals for how countries would fight the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. These ideals are a good basis from which one can address 'the way forward' in a specific context (for example South Africa and investigating solutions to the problems experienced by children in crisis in this country).

According to UNICEF, many challenges still remain. The Rio de Janeiro Declaration and Call for Action to Prevent and Stop Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents (2008), commits governments to a set of specific, time-bound goals. These focus on prevention and cessation of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, and protection of exploited children. Points of deep concern include the increased vulnerability of many children to sexual exploitation resulting from increased poverty, social and gender inequality, discrimination, drug and alcohol abuse, ongoing demand for sex with children, environmental degradation, HIV/AIDS, displacement, unemployment, armed conflict and other emergencies that create strains on the family. Perpetrators of crime against children are often not apprehended in tolerant ineffectual societies.

The active and meaningful participation of 282 adolescents from 96 countries at the World Congress III and their significant contributions against sexual exploitation is appreciated and has been consolidated in the document Adolescent Declaration to

End Sexual Exploitation, which refers to those below the age of 18 years. Throughout this document, 'sexual exploitation of children and adolescents' is used to denote all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of people under the age of 18 in all settings: in the home and family, in schools and educational settings, in care and justice institutions, in the community and in the workplace. Adolescent girls and boys are encouraged to continue their important actions to fight sexual exploitation through forming their networks and promoting their peer to peer initiatives.

A review of progress and outstanding challenges since the 2nd World Congress in Yokohama, Japan, in 2001, includes the entry of international instruments such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child dealing with the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (ratified by 129 States as at 15 November 2008), and increased ratifications of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182. This concerns the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. It includes Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol), supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Also the adoption of new regional groups includes the Council of Europe Conventions on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and on Cybercrime.

UNICEF reports that more States have introduced laws to strengthen the protection of children from sexual exploitation in compliance with international obligations, including enactment of legal provisions for the protection of child victims of sexual exploitation during the process of criminal investigations and trials against alleged perpetrators, taking into account the United Nations Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime.

The development and implementation of national agendas, strategies and plans for protection of children from sexual exploitation, increasingly within the context of broader, national frameworks to create a World Fit for Children, the establishment of multi-sectoral initiatives for prevention and combating of child-trafficking, including for the purpose of sexual exploitation have been initiated.

Agreements between and among states with a view to establish effective co-operation in efforts to prevent and combat cross-border trafficking and sexual exploitation of children and adolescents have emerged. These include detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible and an increased support of tourism and travel companies by signing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. There has also been an increase in some countries both in advocacy, education campaigns, victim support, and training for professionals involved in prevention and protection of children from sexual exploitation.

Furthermore, there has been increased engagement of UN and UN-related organizations, international and national NGOs, other civil society organizations, human rights institutions and inter-governmental organizations in order to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

UNICEF (2009:80) notes that despite progress, there still remain significant gaps in identifying children vulnerable to sexual exploitation, knowledge and understanding of how to react to sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, including children on the move. There is a lack of co-ordinated actions and liaison between different child-protection agencies, especially between governmental agencies. According to the statements of the delegates attending this Conference, an effort must be made to integrate cross-sectional policies so as to create a more coherent framework for effective actions. In many states, laws do not adequately define and criminalize the various forms of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in accordance with applicable international standards, thus hindering the effective protection of children as well as the prosecution of sexual crimes.

UNICEF (2009:84) notes that Consistent law enforcement and the ending of impunity is too often hampered by lack of adequate resources, implementation structures and lack of appropriate training of those involved. Impunity for perpetrators of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents is often perpetuated by lack of investigation and prosecution of offenders within the country where the crime takes place, and the lack of consistent and effective extra-territorial jurisdiction. This is often hindered by a 'dual criminality' requirement, as well as the lack of necessary extradition regulations

and mutual legal assistance agreements and practices. More focus needs to be placed on measures for reduction and elimination of the demand for sex with children and adolescents. Also in some States there are inadequate sanctions against sexual abusers of children.

UNICEF (2009:76) says that children need to be given the right to express their views and have those views given due weight in all matters affecting their lives, including in all administrative and judicial proceedings (Article 17 in the Convention on the Rights of a Child). This consideration is not consistently incorporated in national legislation and practice—especially for child victims of sexual exploitation, who experience further trauma because of the lack of effective opportunities to exercise this right and because of the lack of child-sensitive victim and witness procedures. UNICEF rightly argues that the protection for children’s sexual development, in accordance with their age, empowers them against sexual exploitation but it is not sufficiently recognized. More resources should be made available so that children understand their rights and possibilities for protection and support. International co-operation can help to ensure free, accessible, safe and high quality education for all children. This is considered to be a component of primary prevention against the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

Laws and programmes are often rendered ineffectual in their addressing of trafficking in human beings, including sexual exploitation, because too often they do not recognize the special status of child victims and their right to special protection, including through repatriation procedures that includes the view of the child and guarantees the child’s safety in case of return to their place of origin and support for full restitution of their rights i.e. the opinion of the child is not sought or considered.

UNICEF (2009:86) says many states have not taken all feasible measures to assist child victims of sexual exploitation, including their full social re-integration and their full physical and psychological recovery. Assistance is often compromised by poor co-ordination among the necessary partners (including law enforcement, social workers, mental and physical health professionals, housing immigration, and education services). The link between sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and family violence are not sufficiently acknowledged in policies and programmes.

It notes that lack of reliable data on the prevalence and nature of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and on children at risk, persists, as does inadequate evaluation of the impact of certain measures (for example legislative and social) to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and to support those who have fallen victim to it. Outdated information continues to circulate that is not based on updated knowledge and the wealth of field-based experience in the areas of prevention and protection of children, law enforcement and victim support; and there is insufficient pro-active sharing of experiences and lessons learned.

My overall conclusion at the end of this global survey of child neglect and abuse, is that even 'comprehensive' surveys by the most efficient organisations, for example, UNICEF, still conclude that their evidence is incomplete and indecisive. In these investigations, much of what happens to children, in reality, is hidden. This is because they are vulnerable, and often love the people who abuse them, as is the case with family members. Children also cannot see a way out of their problems because of their dependence on adults. The nature of present day legislation for child rights world-wide is comprehensive and effective in theory, but it is in praxis where the break-down occurs.

At risk of being over-simplistic, as I see the situation globally, as common to man in various degrees, I quote the following scripture as a most appropriate summary: Jeremiah 17:9 describes the heart of man, who does not see the value of children as he should, and as God would have him do, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?'

# **Chapter 3: Children in Crisis: The Challenges in South Africa**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Focus**

This component of the study will focus on the abuse and neglect of children in South Africa. I will look at definitions of abuse and neglect and draw on research including UNICEF and South African Race Relations' statistics with reference to child and youth misbehaviour in South Africa.

### **1.2 Overview – Abuse and Neglect in South Africa**

A survey of children in crisis in South Africa immediately brings to mind child abuse and neglect, even abandonment. The problems are overt-encompassing issues ranging from aggressive physical and emotional hurt to covert omission of nurture and care. The problems are interwoven, and abuse in one area affects others. Those suffering physical poverty are affected more severely due to parental neglect.

The implications of societal and family practices that have negative effects on children and together may tip a negative scale of effects to crisis levels will be investigated. These include the following: engagement with UNICEF statistics, particularly of child rights and the HIV pandemic, legal structures and actual welfare support for children, and those particularly suffering from abuse and neglect.

Government efforts to raise awareness of the needs of women and children will be reported (for example, 16 Days of Activism held in November 2010). I will include mention of Thuthuzela Care Centres, and investigate efforts to deal with child disabilities, for example, those caused through Foetal Alcohol syndrome.

As the scourge of alcohol abuse causes much crisis in South Africa, I will focus some investigation on this, particularly government's efforts to address the problem.

I will then investigate child abuse in depth—reports from victim services and look at abuse from various perspectives including parent-child, siblings, bullying at schools

and sexual, physical and emotional abuse in particular. This investigation will consider measures taken by the South African government to address domestic violence.

We will look beyond clear visible signs of abuse to cyber abuse—the inappropriate attacks on children’s values, morals and ethics due to the onslaught of technically damaging material accessible to children via cell phone, internet and TV. This includes pornography.

Specific reference will be made to the Justice Crime Prevention and Security Cluster and its ways of addressing security awareness, crime prevention, and the effects of crime on societies as well as partnering with communities in establishing community forums.

South Africa is part of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), and thus I will look at particularly pertinent parts of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child regarding specific issues in South Africa.

We will then look at juvenile justice in South Africa. I will allude to the loss of ‘ubuntu’ in our various cultures (rural communities generally do not care for their own disadvantaged children as they once did, and is still done in other African countries).

I will then engage deeply with the research done by Lucy Holborn and Gail Eddy for the Department of Race Relations in the form of a report on ‘The Fractured family’ in South Africa known as First Steps to Healing released in early 2011.

I will then engage with comments of strategic authorities who monitor and promote the well-being of children.

The conclusion will highlight the most severe areas of neglect and abuse as I see them and point to the areas in which the church should focus attention to alleviate these, the subject of Chapter 4.

### **1.3 Definitions of Abuse and Neglect**

I have looked at the official definitions of abuse, neglect and abandonment as used by various American States to give a clear basis on which to investigate these

problems in South Africa. Each shows a different understanding of the subject. Pride (1986:170) lists these definitions:

Alabama (ALA Code s 26-14-1 (1) and (2) Supp. 1984) defines abuse as harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare which can occur through intentional mental injury, non-accidental sexual abuse, or, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation. Sexual abuse includes sexual molestation, incest and rape. Sexual exploitation includes permitting, encouraging or engaging in obscene or pornographic photography or filming, including for commercial purposes. Negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child would include failure to provide adequate food, medical treatment, shelter or clothing.

American Samoa [AM. SAMOA CEODE ANN. S 45.2001 (a) (1), (c) (1982)] adds more specific examples. Abuse or child abuse or neglect means an act or omission in one of the following categories, seriously threatening the health or welfare of a child: (A) Any case where a child exhibits malnutrition, failure to thrive, evidence of serious bruising, bleeding, subdural hematoma, burns, fractures of any bone, soft tissue swelling or death, and the death is not justifiably explained.

Pride (1986:172) says that Arizona [ARIV.REV.STAT. 58 – 546 (1), (2), (4) (supp.1984)] uses these definitions: Abandoned means the failure of the parent to provide reasonable support and to maintain regular contact with the child, including the providing of normal supervision when such failure is seen as an intention on the part of the parent to permit such a condition to continue indefinitely. Failure to maintain a normal parental relationship with the child without a just cause for six months constitutes abandonment. Abuse means the affliction of bodily function or disfigurement or the infliction of serious emotional damage as revealed by severe anxiety, withdrawal, depression or untoward aggressive behaviour, and which is diagnosed by a specialist—medical doctor or psychologist. A dependent child is considered to be in need of proper parental or guardian care. A destitute child is one who needs the necessities of life, or whose home is considered unsafe for child-habitation due to cruelty, or neglect by the parent, guardian or custodian.

Pride (1986:141) makes some thought-provoking comments on the attitudes and ramifications from serious issues that we do not usually research in their long-term

societal damage. She talks about abortion actually torturing a baby to death and that abortion leads to anti-child attitudes. She says, 'If you can legally murder your child before birth, it's hard to understand why you can't clap him around afterwards.' She concurs with a study on Canadian Provinces in 1979, that states which forbade abortion or limited abortion had vastly lower child abuse rates than those which did allow it. She repeatedly states that because the laws and punishment are so much more lenient on the offenders than they were in the past, the incidences of child abuse are much higher now.

## **2. UNICEF study of Child Rights in South Africa**

### **2.1 Background to formation of new constitution 1996**

In a UNICEF study of 'Child Rights' in South Africa (2009:14), it was noted that historically, even as apartheid was being officially dismantled in the 1980's, many children suffered rights violations—including assault, torture, detention without trial, and restricted access to health care, education and protection. In negotiations held between 1990 and 1993, institutional segregation was undone and a new Constitution was instituted in 1996.

### **2.2 Child Rights in South Africa**

UNICEF (2009:14) confirms that child rights are now at the heart of the post-apartheid constitution. Section 28 of South Africa's Bill of Rights guarantees children's right to an identity, basic services, education and protection within the legal system. Other key legislation to protect the rights of children introduced at this time included the Films and Publications Act, the Domestic Violence Act, the Child Justice Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and the Sexual Offences Act.

#### **2.2.1 2005 Children's Act and Amendment**

The most comprehensive addition to the child rights' framework is the 2005 Children's Act and Amendment, which reinforces provisions in the Bill of Rights and details the responsibilities of parents and guardians. Important provisions include the right of access to state grants for children over age sixteen who head households. In the 'Bill of Rights' in the South African Constitution (Chapter 2) the comprehensive

list of rights for children shows the importance they are given according to the State. The text below includes all amendments, up to and including the 16th Amendment to the Constitution.

## 28. Children

Every child has the right to a name and a nationality from birth; to family care or parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment; to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services; to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation; to be protected from exploitative labour practices; not to be required or permitted to perform work or provide services that are inappropriate for a person of that child's age; or place at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development; not to be detained except as a measure of last resort, in which case, in addition to the rights a child enjoys under sections 12 and 35, the child may be detained only for the shortest appropriate period of time, and has the right to be kept separately from detained persons over the age of 18 years; and treated in a manner, and kept in conditions that take account of the child's age; to have a legal practitioner assigned to the child by the state, and at state expense, in civil proceedings affecting the child, if substantial injustice would otherwise result; and not to be used directly in armed conflict, and to be protected in times of armed conflict. A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

In this section 'child' means a person under the age of 18 years.

There is also greater access to health care for young people, including the right of consent to HIV testing and treatment as reported by UNICEF (2009:14).

### **2.2.2 Challenges of enacting child rights**

According to UNICEF (2009:14), the challenges of enacting child rights is a

necessary strong framework, but not sufficient, for ensuring that children are protected and have the scope to participate as empowered citizens. Reversing decades of social problems fostered by apartheid is a huge challenge, especially as there is widespread poverty, a global economic downturn, and the national and regional AIDS pandemic. More than one quarter of the population is living on less than R8,75 per day (at the exchange rate of R7 to the \$) according to the most recent international estimates, and the country's income distribution is among the most unequal in the world.

In 2007, around 18 per cent of adults aged 15–49 were HIV positive. UNICEF (2009:14) tabled that among the country's youth, 4 per cent of males and 13 per cent of females aged 15–24 were living with HIV. An estimated 1.4 million children under 18, or 8 per cent of South Africa's children, have lost one or both parents to AIDS.

The human rights-based approach to cooperation for children and women has, since 1988, been a means of UNICEF (2009:12) having a huge influence in promoting a basis of consideration for women and children rights in each programme (under the Convention and CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women). The organization's country programmes are guided by human rights principles applied in all phases and sectors. According to UNICEF, the human rights-based approach is derived from principles that underlie both conventions: accountability, universality and non-discrimination, participation and indivisibility. It is firmly embedded in the work of the United Nations, which in 2003 passed a statement of Common Understanding of a Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation.

As far as UNICEF (2009:12) is concerned, despite these efforts, including legal frameworks, the social groups that have always suffered from marginalization and discrimination, are still consistently the most at risk of having their rights violated or unfulfilled, especially women and children, who still have the greatest need, and especially those living in remote rural locations or urban slums. There is neglect in basic medical need such as immunization. A human rights-based approach to immunization would prioritize and deploy resources and thus intervene and result in fewer childhood deaths.

As far as accountability is concerned, according to UNICEF (2009:12), under a human rights-based approach, children and women are recognized as holders of rights rather than objects of charity—afforded special protection under human rights treaties and frameworks. Empowered citizens and the treaty bodies can therefore assess governments' progress towards implementing human rights accords, as well as reporting violations.

UNICEF (2009:12) states that all human rights are indivisible and interdependent, which implies that no single right should be prioritized over another. For children, indivisibility means ensuring that the rights of the 'whole child' are met through addressing their physical, developmental, psychological, and spiritual needs. Therefore this care extends beyond basic provision of essential services such as basic health care and education. It also necessitates working in partnership with other organizations which have the expertise to meet these needs.

There is now specific focus on early childhood development, concern and provision for maternal, newborn and child health and a protective environment for children. It also extends its core commitments to addressing children in emergencies, including education, child protection counselling and psychosocial therapy for those affected by natural disasters, armed conflict or pandemics. A human rights-based approach attempts to involve role players in the process i.e. participation of community leaders even in marginalized situations states UNICEF (2009:14).

According to UNICEF (2009:14), in confronting the task ahead, the South African government has the challenge of accelerating the progress of addressing survival, development, protection and participation for the eighteen million children. Some essential services have relatively high levels of coverage by international standards. For example, coverage of routine immunization as measured by three doses of diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus toxoid vaccine stands at 97 per cent, while 93 per cent of the population—and 100 per cent in urban areas—has access to improved drinking water. In other areas, faster progress is required. The latest international estimates indicate that 14 per cent of primary-school-age children are not enrolled in the appropriate education level; at the secondary level, 30 per cent of adolescent boys and 25 per cent of girls. Sanitation facilities, with more than one third of urban

dwellers and more than half of rural dwellers, are still sub-standard.

Fighting the AIDS pandemic and alleviating the associated effects on children has high priority with much progress evident-from prevention to treatment. About 5.7 million people lived with HIV in 2007, so much greater efforts at all levels are urgently required states UNICEF (2009:14). Violence against children remains at high levels, despite the provisions embodied in the Children's Act. Also, around 22 per cent of South African children are not registered at birth. Birth registration allows children to access basic services, including child support grants.

### **2.3 Noteworthy developments in application of child rights**

In South Africa, children have actively participated in defending their rights. In 1992, for example, the Molo Songololo organization (2011), hosted a summit on child rights which was attended by hundreds of children. According to its website, much of their collective input was adopted into the Children's Charter of South Africa. Children and young people also participated in the drafting of the 2005 Children's Act, which includes child participation as a founding principle. The South African Parliament and Government, both at national and local levels, are working to raise the awareness of children's and parents' about their rights. Bridging the gap between rights and actually realizing them is the next step.

## **3. Causes of neglect and abuse of children**

### **3.1 Alcohol Abuse**

One of the causes of neglect of children and violence which severely affects them is the abuse of alcohol. While visiting Jerusalem Ministries' Human Dignity Centre, which distributes fresh vegetables for nursery schools operating in the Walmer Township of Port Elizabeth, I saw a man wheeling two crates of alcohol in a wheelbarrow. I had heard my brother, Peter Freeman, who went with us, describe seeing the same phenomenon a few months before, and who said that at the end of each month many of the classes and activities of the Centre are disrupted by absenteeism of children because the parents are often too drunk to take them anywhere. Many spend their government grant money on alcohol.

### 3.1.1 Government interventions

An article compiled by the Government Communication and Information System (2008:46) entitled 'SA draws the line on alcohol abuse', depicts the gravity of the situation in South Africa. Though the subject of alcohol abuse was the initiator of this article, the ramifications, particularly violence towards women and children, were the main consideration. At the launch of the 16 Days of Activism campaign in Khayelitsha, Cape Town on 18 November 2010, violence against women and children was confronted by Justice and Constitutional Development Minister Jeff Radebe, who said that it was an attack on South Africa's Bill of Rights and Constitution and that it could no longer be tolerated. On 25 November 2010 the report was tabled on the southafrica.info website. Radebe went on to say that a recent government survey found that women who wanted to report abuse often had to wait three to four hours in police stations repeating the same story to several police officers. The report noted that medical examinations were held days later. It was found that doctors rarely treated survivors for HIV or offered medical assistance and that women faced more risk of being raped when they walked back from hospital. The fact that women and children that had been raped often have to wait several hours before having attention that they needed, is confirmed by the Report on the feasibility and location of Thuthuzela Care Centres for Gauteng Phase 2. These women often have to wait until evening sitting on hard benches. This report also mentions that doctors often did not want to go to court themselves in follow-up after these investigations. Lay counsellors from the NGO Vulamelo avail themselves in coming alongside the victims of abuse. If a child has been sexually abused by a person with whom she lives, she is immediately removed from the home by a social worker from Psycho Social Services.

In his speech at the launch of the 16 Days of Activism campaign in Khayelitsha, Cape Town on 18th November 2010, Radebe said that, often when the case involved a partner or ex-boyfriend, many police officers discouraged women from laying charges. BuaNews (2012) reported Radebe's speech, and recorded him as saying that in order to counter such incidents, his Department had set up 54 Sexual Offences Courts called 'Thuthuzela Care Centres', which had set up dedicated waiting areas away from the accused (to reduce emotional stress levels), while

children are able to give testimony via closed-circuit television.

The minister also opened the 27th Thuthuzela Care Centre in Pietermaritzburg during mid-November 2010. These centres aim to link women who have been sexually abused to social workers, health workers and prosecutors. BuaNews reported that at the launch, Minister of Basic Education Angie Motshekga (2010) said that the care centres have been one of the government's most successful programmes, adding that another one would be opening soon in KwaZulu-Natal.

This report (2012), also from 25 November 2010, was followed by the story of a woman from Cape Town who had been a victim of domestic abuse. The woman, who asked to remain anonymous to protect her children, spoke out about the nineteen years of abuse she suffered at the hands of her husband. 'I've been abused in all ways possible – sexually, physically and financially,' said the woman, who had finally left her husband two months before when he began abusing her children, including sexually. She was now trying to pick up the pieces of her life and was busy writing a book about her abuse.

Lulu Xingwana, Minister for Women, Children and People with Disabilities, who also spoke in Khayelitsha at the launch of the 16 Days of Activism for the rights of women and children (2010:1), said it was the responsibility of all in the community to report incidences of abuse of women and children to police or social workers. 'The Children's Act in particular makes it illegal for someone not to do anything if they are aware of the abuse,' said Xingwana. At the same launch, the Western Cape Minister of Social Development, Patricia de Lille, said that her Department would be running a campaign in the province during the 16 Days of Activism, targeting men who were not paying maintenance for their children. De Lille estimated that the value of maintenance defaults was over R9.5-million. She stated that her Department, together with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, would publish the names of the defaulters daily and that twelve road blocks would also be set up in the Western Cape over the following sixteen days to track down defaulters. She went on to say that community development workers were out in the community to help trace about three hundred mothers who were not claiming disbursements. This amount totalled about R3-million.

### 3.1.2 Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

According to BuaNews (2010), on the 18th November 2010 at The Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) Indaba, in Johannesburg, the Minister for Social Development, Bathabile Dlamini, referred to measures being taken by the South African Government, to fight alcoholism. She indicated that the South African government had been pro-active in dealing with the scourge of alcohol abuse, especially amongst pregnant women, by challenging the liquor industry to re-evaluate the type of advertisements that portray the drinking of alcohol as prestigious and in portraying the myth that excessive drinking is acceptable. She pointed out that the complexity of the problem would only yield results, that is, by reducing the number of alcohol-dependent people, if collective action was taken. Dlamini referred to the damage alcohol abuse causes the developing foetus as a whole lifetime of dealing with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). She included mention of mental and physical defects, which debilitates their development when compared with their peers, particularly stunting intellectual and emotional growth. She also mentioned studies which have been conducted in rural populations and those associated with wine farms in the Western Cape which show that fifty per thousand school-entry children have FASD and that in four disadvantaged communities in Gauteng, the rate is over twenty six per thousand children. The worst area is the Northern Cape in De Aar (prevalence rates exceed one hundred per thousand) and Upington (seventy per thousand).

In an article (2011:398,399) entitled Fetal alcohol syndrome: dashed hopes, damaged lives in June 2011, Alicestine October reported that the Western Cape had the highest reported rate in the world. 'When I was pregnant with my son I drank a lot—mostly on weekends,' said Marion Williams, a 45-year-old mother who lost two of her five children in childbirth. She lives in one of South Africa's famous wine-growing areas in the Western Cape. She started drinking as a teenager and stated that she believed that she had been taken out of school, to work to buy wine for her parents.

According to the missionary workers and local church leaders, the children in Mogagong, Northern Cape, show a definite physical and mental debilitation due to alcohol syndrome, especially in their facial expression. In addition, their bodies are

often small and their concentration spans are short. Local residents affirm that alcohol consumption by pregnant women is prevalent.

The photographs of the children show some of the physical symptoms indicated by FAS, according to the Kids health website (2010).

When a woman drinks alcohol during pregnancy, she risks giving birth to a child who will pay the price — in mental and physical deficiencies — for his or her entire life.

Physical signs in the Magogong children include small heads and facial abnormalities, including smaller eye openings, flattened cheekbones, and indistinct philtrum (poorly developed groove between nose and upper lip). Developmental delays included poor coordination/fine motor skills. Social and behavioural symptoms include difficulties in relating to each other, even as friends, hyperactivity, and inability to concentrate. Some children isolate themselves, even in the crowd, are over-anxious, stubborn or impulsive. Some are apathetic, lacking imagination or curiosity. Cognitive problems include learning difficulties, poor memory and understanding or language comprehension, and poor problem-solving skills – in excess of the non-FAS child.

### **3.1.3 Addressing alcohol consumption and regulations regarding health messages**

Again, at the 2010 The Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) Indaba in Johannesburg, the Minister for Social Development, Bathabile Dlamini (2010:1) also mentioned that South Africa is one of the countries with the highest alcohol consumption and the unacceptable number of babies born with FAS, despite a law which demands that liquor companies label their products, warning consumers of health problems associated with the consumption of alcohol. This is evidenced in Section 15 of the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act 52 of 1972 tabled by the Minister of health and applied as from March 2009. The regulations relating to health messages (one of which is mandatory for printing on the label, in black on white and being at least an eighth of the size of the label, legible and distinct) is to be found in Act 54 of 1972. Alcohol includes beer and African beer (Act 59 of 2003). The messages are

excellent and need to be known, but my question is, why does only one message have to be printed on the label, and at the discretion of the manufacturer? I mention four of the seven optional messages:

4. Alcohol is a major cause of violence and crime.
5. Alcohol abuse is dangerous to your health.
6. Alcohol is addictive.
7. Drinking during pregnancy can be harmful to your unborn baby.

Parry (2012:102 (7): 602-604), the director of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit (ADARU) at the Medical Research Council (MRC) and an Extraordinary Professor of Psychiatry at Stellenbosch University, in championing a total ban on alcohol advertising and presenting the public case, has the following to say:

Evidence from burden of disease and economic costing studies amply indicate that the public health burden from hazardous and harmful use of alcohol in South Africa warrants drastic action. Evidence that banning alcohol advertising is likely to be an effective intervention is reflected in WHO strategy documents on non-communicable diseases and harmful use of alcohol. Studies on young people furthermore support arguments refuting the claim that advertising only influences brand choice.

Parry (2012:102; 602–604), refers, in the South African Medical Journal (7), to the heated debate in government concerning implementing a total ban on advertising. He points to the studies relating to the effective ban of cigarette advertising supplemented by other policy interventions. The arguments raised by opposition parties include disagreeing with job losses. He points out that a ban of alcohol will require scrutiny of digital media and TV and merchandising to stop subverting the ban.

There is a fierce argument at this time (2012) with respect to FIFA and the efforts of Brazil, the 2014 world cup host, concerning alcohol. Brazil is in having difficulty with

respect to addressing alcohol abuse, and of notable concern is the fact that many young people and children also drink. The country is making a concerted effort to deal with this problem but FIFA, football's world governing body, keeps insisting that alcohol must be sold at all venues hosting matches. It even speaks of the *right* to sell beer. But alcohol is currently banned from Brazilian stadia as part of measures to reduce violence in football and to improve public health in general. Eurocare says that the country's health minister has urged Congress to maintain the ban in the new 'World Cup law'.

A WHO study carried out in (among others) Brazil, showed that about 46 per cent of violence-related cases included alcohol use. Brazil has a dangerous history of alcohol abuse. Even in 2008 great progress to counteract this problem was evidenced in Brazil (2008). President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva championed the prohibition of alcohol advertising on radio and television. His government temporarily banned the sale of alcohol on federal highways and aimed to implement similar measures at urban gas stations. 'The country can't stand by with its arms folded while hundreds of people, especially the young, die each day from the abusive consumption of alcohol', Health Minister José Gomes Temporão said.

One has to question the theory and practice of the South African government's intent to lower alcohol consumption. The media often shows advertisements that promote alcohol intake. Some advertisements imply that there is a way of handling alcohol 'with integrity'. It seems to me that the whole point of responsibility is lost. Can one really imbibe alcohol with integrity, even after age eighteen? In a society characterised by tremendous financial constraints and the vulnerability of children, alcohol has to be viewed in a negative light, especially when one considers cost, damage to health and behaviour. Its influence on children is particularly negative.

On its website (2001), the International Centre for Alcohol Policies (ICAP) indicated in a survey from 2001, that South Africa's advertising was based solely on self-regulation, the process whereby the industry actively participates in and is responsible for its own regulation. The 118 other countries surveyed in 1996 indicated approaches other than self-regulation, namely statutory legislation, a

combination of the two, advertising of alcohol being banned, some controls and no controls.

I appreciated concern expressed by the Minister for Social Development, Bathabile Dlamini (2010), about the damage alcohol abuse can have on families, which, according to BuaNews, at The Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) Indaba, in Johannesburg, she called 'the very institutions that constitute important pillars of society'. She pointed out that women bear the brunt of domestic violence due to this problem, as a result of strained power relations in families and said that the women usually remain silent about any physical or emotional abuse sustained, primarily due to poverty caused by lack of income. Dlamini noted with concern that women themselves, as victims of domestic violence, often turn to alcohol, falling victims to the myth that 'alcohol solves people's problems'. This applies to a diverse group of women, including, young old, or pregnant women. She saw alcohol abuse as something that threatens the stability and success of the South African nation.

Another report showing alcohol consumption in a serious light, was released in January 2012 by the International Organization of Good Templars-International (2010), and states that, as indicated on the Arrive Alive website, when South Africa hosted the 2010 FIFA World Cup, it had to put structures in place to deal with alcohol abuse, especially for drivers. The 'Arrive Alive' campaign in South Africa reports that it is faced with 14 000 yearly fatalities resulting from accidents on its roads. One of the major contributing factors is alcohol consumption. This has serious ramifications for families and the attitudes of so many who imbibe alcohol. Large numbers of children are affected.

Eucam (2011), reports that Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi stated in early 2011 that he would fight to ban all forms of tobacco and alcohol advertising. During his budget speech he said, 'No matter how financially powerful groups and institutions are, no matter how much money they make, I can stake my life that we are going to fight with our bare knuckles to achieve this.' However, according to chief director of the Department of Social Development, Conny Nxumalo, the government's resolution on alcohol advertising was not intended to impose an outright ban, but to introduce restrictions. Among these restrictions are time slots during which alcohol

adverts could be banned from television, and the locations and content of adverts. When asked about the monetarily-based opposition by opponents of the government's plans, as happened in Brazil, Nxumalo told the South African Times Live: 'Yes, we need to look at the economy, but the government also has to deal with the social ills of alcohol abuse. The government in all spheres is spending a lot of money on dealing with the problems resulting from alcohol abuse.' In its report, The South African Times Live references an independent market analyst who concludes that a complete ban on the advertising of alcohol would have the following results:

1. About R800-million would be lost on sports sponsorships, development grants and forfeited marketing spending.
2. Radio, lifestyle magazines and newspapers would lose R900-million.
3. 2500 jobs would be lost, depriving about 30000 people of an income.
4. R280-million would be lost in VAT.
5. The ban would lead to a short-term drop in branded liquor consumption of 5 per cent to 8 per cent.

### **3.1.4 Alcohol and its effects in South Africa**

My reason for focusing so heavily on the issue of alcohol is because it is often a serious cause of neglect and abuse of children. If the child is not psychologically damaged by an alcoholic parent or relative, he/she is certainly affected by the consequences. These will inevitably cause damage, especially neglect, because the child receives either no attention or negative attention, as a result. Also, abuse may just as easily be emotional and social if there is no actual personal, physical abuse.

In a study on child and misbehaviour in South Africa, Maree (2011:61) endorses the relationship alcohol has on violent crime in particular. She refers to Shaw's research on the occurrence of violent crimes like murder, assault, rape and child abuse possibly being caused by alcohol abuse. Shaw (1997:8–9) found that in the family and community many victims and perpetrators of violent crimes were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crime.

Crime information Analysis Centre of the South African Police Service (2002:96–113), confirms that most murders studied occurred over weekends, often occurring

on Saturday afternoons after liquor outlets had closed and often in and around shebeens (illegal taverns or bars). In most cases, the perpetrator or the victim or both had been under the influence of alcohol, at which time an argument had arisen. This had led to assault which at times was so serious that the victim died.

In another survey among SAPS Station Commanders in the Johannesburg region, (2002), Rauh found that substance abuse, and predominantly alcohol, was the second most common factor contributing to crime in the region, and particularly, violent crime such as assault, rape and murder. Incidences were most common in informal settlements and formal townships with public entertainment areas. The primary cause was given as socio-economic factors which included conditions of unemployment, lack of physical resources and dislocation in poor communities.

## **3.2 Child abuse in South Africa**

### **3.2.1 Parent-child abuse**

According to a government report from 'Victim Services' (2012), for the conflict to be upgraded to the category of abuse the following criteria have to be considered: The interaction becomes violent and the victim feels powerless to stop it and it extends over a period of time. According to Booyens et al. (2011:35), on the nature and extent of child and youth misbehaviour in South Africa, there is a history of child abuse in South Africa. Brown et al. (1996:73), argue that sibling abuse is more frequent than parent-child abuse.

### **3.2.2 Sibling abuse**

Caffaro and Conn-Caffaro (1998:33–34), list prior characteristics of sibling abusers which includes victimisation by other people including parents, older siblings or non-family members. They show lack of impulse control and emotional immaturity, including inner rage, a need for power and control and usually a lack of social skills. Erika Publów (2006) expands on sibling abuse in an online article. She says they may react due to alcohol or drug abuse and may use force to coerce the victim. Caffaro and Conn-Caffaro (1998:72) define Sibling Abuse (Sibling Incest) as “sexual behaviour between siblings which is not age-appropriate, is not transitory, and is not

motivated by developmentally appropriate curiosity". They note that sibling abuse may be physical, psychological or sexual. Physical abuse (76-77) from a sibling includes, hitting, pushing, kicking, beating and may include a weapon to inflict injury. This phenomenon is more prevalent where the eldest sibling is a male between age ten and fourteen among male-only siblings. It is more than double that for girls in all-female families.

Caffaro and Conn-Caffaro (1998:13), also argue that psychological sibling abuse includes emotional abuse which includes forcing a sibling to witness violence, or neglect (1998:13). Verbal abuse includes ridicule, insults, threats, and belittling and damaging their property-aiming to make the sibling feel rejected, degraded and exploited. Sexual abuse of a sibling is usually by an older brother for experimentation, lack of parental affection or available female peers. The perpetrator may have been physically and/or sexually abused himself. The sister is forced into this relationship through coercion and violence. This sexual abuse can occur between sister and brother, two brothers or two sisters.

Furthering their argument, Caffaro and Conn-Caffaro (1998:41), point out that a female incest offender has usually experienced prior physical and/sexual abuse, usually by a male offender. A male victim almost never reports his case of incest because of the fear of social stigma. He usually feels unable to talk about feelings or problems, not wanting to appear vulnerable. They are less likely to disclose any information about sexual abuse. Caffaro and Conn-Caffaro state that research indicates that unsupervised older brother contact with younger male siblings is the usual problem. Again this is undisclosed because the sexuality of the child, especially homosexual tendencies, is in question.

There is minimal research on sister-sister abuse. It is suggested that the perpetrator is likely to have been previously molested by the father or older brother. Sister-sister incest seems less traumatic for the victim, with less coercion, less violating and of shorter duration (1998:56–61). What is common to all this research is that perpetrators of sibling abuse were themselves victims of abuse.

### 3.2.3 Bullying in schools

The characteristics of a school bully according to Nesor (2003:128), include being large, lacking parental supervision, being impulsive, aggressive, harsh (lacking sympathy), introspective and selfish, domineering, and refusing to accept responsibility for his/her actions.

Bullying in schools has only been receiving proper academic attention since the 1970's in South Africa. According to Nesor (2003:129), it is characterised by six factors:

- Intent to harm (pleases the bully)
- Bullying can be ongoing over a period of time and be intense
- The bully chooses the victim according to his/her own age, size, strength or gender.
- Usually vulnerable-looking (defenceless) victims are chosen
- Usually victims lack support, often enduring the bullying without reporting it
- The victim can suffer lasting damaging consequences and may withdraw from school activities.

According to Fried and Fried (1996:13), physical abuse by bullies includes poking, punching, shoving, hair-pulling, biting, stabbing, burning, strangling, suffocating and poisoning. Nesor (2003:128), contends that verbal abuse includes persistent name-calling, teasing and gossiping. It is the most common form of verbal abuse according to Fried and Fried (1996:13). Relational abuse, according to Nesor (2003:128) is the deliberate exclusion from group activities. I have experienced this first-hand as a child because I had third degree burn scars on my arm, and the fact that I was different made the ringleader decide to exclude me from an activity, which was very hurtful!

Emotional abuse includes terrorising, humiliating, defaming, ostracising and blackmailing. Sexual abuse, according to Nesor, includes sexual harassment and exhibitionism (2003:128). Fried and Fried list those things which would be considered sexual harassment as making suggestive comments about apparel,

displaying affection ('making out') at school, tampering with clothing, for example, pulling up a girl's dress.

## **4. Abuse in South Africa**

### **4.1 Introduction**

According to Thio (2007:123), violence occurs at all socio-economic levels, but particularly among poor people, yet sexual abuse does not show significant differences. He argues that sexual abuse is usually perpetrated by fathers on their daughters and leads to emotional damage which lasts long-term into adulthood. Girls suffer guilt, anxiety, depression and isolate themselves from peers. Long-term they are often dissatisfied with sexual relationships, which in turn threatens marriage relationships.

Thio (2007:123), contends that child abuse generally is the physical abuse of children by their parents. In comparison to non-abused peers, the abused children often experience psychological, social and emotional problems, often resulting in learning disabilities and poor academic performance. They may run away from home or even become involved with crime. One of the most serious consequences is the likelihood of them becoming abusers themselves as adults, taking to alcohol or drugs as well as abusing their own children.

### **4.2 Sexual abuse in South Africa**

In 2001, the international public was made aware of sexual atrocities committed against children in South Africa with the publicised news of the rape of babies.

Mc Greal reported in The Guardian of 3 November 2001,

South Africa has been shocked by a series of rapes of babies and very young children, including a four-year-old who died after an alleged assault by her father. The police say there have been 21,000 cases of child rape or assault reported in the past year, mostly committed by male relatives of the victims. The figure had risen sharply in the past 10 years, they added.

The Northern Cape minister of health, Dipuo Peters, said: 'I suspect that at least part of the reason these children were raped is because of the myth held in rural areas by men with HIV that they can cleanse themselves by having sex with a virgin.'

According to Wedge et al. (2000:32), 68 per cent of the participants in a study in South Africa, had suffered some sort of abuse, 84 per cent of which were a result of violence, family disruption and strife during and directly following the era of apartheid. Of the participants, 36 per cent reported that they had been neglected or ill-treated by parents or care-givers, 44 per cent reported physical abuse, while only one reported sexual abuse (though Wedge and partners state that they believe this to be false as reporting of such matters is such a sensitive issue). Wedge states that in most cases (74 per cent) sexual assault is committed by a person who knows the victim, usually in a private dwelling. The highest rate of offence is committed against 10 to 14-year-old girls, then against males over the age of ten, and lastly to males under the age of ten. Many of these children escape to the streets where they fall prey to crime.

The evil, criminal minds in this sphere of South African society were again highlighted on the News 24 website in mid-April 2012, which reported the most shocking news of a seventeen-year old mentally disabled girl in Johannesburg being gang-raped by a group of young men, including two minors. A ten-minute video was taken of the event and then released virally (2012:1). Even if this girl has a mental age of a small child (of four years), she will be scarred for life. Also, the fact that two minors could be part of this terrible crime-influenced by the older men-shows the horrific level of criminal intent. At the time of writing, four of the suspects had been released on bail of a mere R500 each.

### **4.3 Department of Justice and Constitutional Development**

#### **4.3.1 Domestic Violence**

Intentions by the South African government to address domestic violence are clearly indicated in the South Africa Yearbook 2010/11 for Justice and Correctional Services. This publication clearly indicates that the Department of Justice and

Constitutional Development is committed to supporting victims (especially women and children), and to promoting their rights, especially in the sphere of domestic violence (2010/11:343-344). There is also a special effort being made to help elderly victims through the courts and criminal-justice processes. Through the Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP), led by the Department of Social Development, a platform exists for enabling victims of crime to have improved quality of life and circumstances.

The document states that for victims to feel safer and more secure, perpetrators of domestic violence should also be brought to court (2010/11:343). During 2009/10, the Department finalised a review of the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act 116 of 1998), in courts. Its findings were submitted to the Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS), the VEP Task Team and the Portfolio Committee on Women, Children and People with Disabilities, which gave a mandate to the Department to develop the JCPS Domestic Violence Strategy to link with the broader VEP. By mid-2010, the draft document was in its initial consultation phases and expected to be finalised in the 2011/12 financial year.

#### **4.3.2 Victims of crime**

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2010), issued a year book 2010/11 which outlined the Government's intentions to help victims of crime (2010:351-353). In this regard, the Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) delivery agreement dated 24 October 2010, was issued by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development for this purpose. I believe that this agreement is worthwhile investigating as it is a fairly comprehensive reflection of the government's intentions to help victims of crime. I will quote government's intentions and then comment on pertinent information concerning child crime victims.

As government, we have identified the fight against crime as one of the priorities we need to address as part of building a better society and country envisaged in our Constitution, and demanded by all law-abiding citizens. Today, the Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster Ministers have signed the Cluster's Delivery Agreement with the President through the Minister in the Presidency.

The Agreement constitutes government's program of action in making South Africa safer for all citizens and residents, and to make the country more attractive to investors and visitors who have expressed concerns about crime in South Africa.

The JCPS cluster's vision (2010:1), states as its main objective (Outcome 3), 'All people in South Africa are and feel safe'. There is an appeal for the public to work alongside the government to the fight against crime and corruption, in order to build safer communities.

### **4.3.3 Cyber Crime**

In specific relation to children who suffer from neglect and abuse there is mention of improved management of caseloads in the country's courts and regulations to combat cybercrime. I am conscious of the cases of lack of parental control or carer control with respect to what the children in their care are exposed to in terms of pornography and chat rooms on the internet. It is not just children in homes that have internet, and who can access pornography, but many even in conditions of poverty can access it from public libraries. Johannes Malherbe from Naturebound, and author of some of the children's ministry material used by the South African Theological Seminary, recalls that he personally witnessed an African child in a Tanzanian library, 'doing an assignment' but having a pornographic image on his computer which he accessed when he thought no-one was looking. He shared this information at a TEASA (The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa) Children's Ministry meeting at De Oude Werf in Kempton Park on 25th May 2011. Involved in this discussion, at which I was present, were three international leaders of Compassion International, Morompi Ole-Ronkei, Sidney Musiyio and Jonas Sawadogo, Ann Adams (TEASA), and Bernard Joubert (Petra College Western Cape) amongst others. In this discussion, mention was made of the many children who have cell phones and receive pornographic images from friends—even in poor communities.

### **4.2.4 JCPS working in collaboration to fight crime and create positive change**

The JCPS Cluster Statement (2010), mentions other issues that have direct implications addressing neglect and abuse amongst children in crisis in South Africa.

This includes 'complimenting the efforts made by other clusters to eradicate poverty, create economic opportunities and build stable families and communities'. The sentiment expressed is that a combination of these factors is required to stem crime in South Africa, and would also ensure accountability, improved decision making, and timely interventions. "Today's signing of the JCPS Delivery Agreement signifies a renewed, coordinated and transparent approach to the fight against crime. The agreement pulls together all stakeholders in the criminal justice system and channels all efforts towards a common goal."

It was noted by JCPS (2010) that, in terms of reported cases, there was a 7.2 per cent decline in incidences of murder between 2003/04 and 2009/10, with a decline in assault of 20 per cent during the same period, which was an 'encouraging' sign. I found references to efforts to eradicate corruption in the document—even internal corruption in JCPS (Cluster outputs point 3), and realised again that the right structures and intentions can be stated in eloquence and be beyond reproach in content, but the real battle is in the wickedness of man—and, unfortunately, many in place of trusted authority.

In order for the JCPS to reduce overall levels of serious crime, in particular, contact and trio crimes (including a third party), and to improve public perception of the fight against crime in order to create a feeling of safety amongst the people of South Africa, they intended to implement certain measures to reduce reported serious crimes from 3,924 per 100 000 people (1,910,847 crimes reported altogether) to at least 3,767 per 100 000 people and to reduce contact crimes from 1,407 per 100 000 people (685,185 crimes reported altogether) to 930 per 100,000 people whilst reducing trio crimes from 97,1 per 100 000 people (47 273 crimes reported altogether), to 67 per 100 000 people. How would this be realised? They would try to:

- improve coordinated crime intelligence
- increase visible policing/patrolling in identified hotspots
- increase crime prevention actions

- reduce the proliferation of illegal and legal firearms
- align and integrate strategies and information sources to apprehend and charge known perpetrators
- reduce the number of escapes from custody
- strengthen the management of bail processes and legislation
- improve forensic services and fingerprint management using integrated technologies and databases
- implement social crime prevention programmes
- activate Community Safety Forums
- improve the production of court-ready dockets in order to achieve a 2 per cent increase in the number of criminal cases finalised each year
- reduce case backlogs and would finalise cases through diversion and Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism (ADRM)
- reduce the average time spent in remand by suspects or accused persons
- increase the percentage of parolees who commit no offences while on parole
- increase offender involvement in rehabilitation programmes.

All these measures are vital to minimise these crimes, and that especially for the abusers of children, there should be rehabilitation for the whole family, together, as long as the safety of the children is guaranteed.

In improving public perception of crime management, to make citizens feel more protected, safer and free to engage in their daily life activities, the Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) cluster (2010), stated that they would strive to promote trust in the criminal justice system by improving support to victims of crime

and building partnerships with communities. In this connection, the targets and indicator statistics reflecting the percentage of crime victims would be published annually and regular workshops and seminars would be conducted with the community and the Community Safety Forum (CSF) on security awareness, crime prevention and effects of crime on the society. Also, their intention was to increase the number of Thuthuzela Care Centres from 20 to 35 by 2014 to assist victims of sexual violence and human trafficking. Plans were also underway to increase the number of friendly facilities for victims of sexual offences and human trafficking at police stations and to increase the number of victims who attended parole hearings from 265 in November 2010 to 1060 in 2014.

#### **4.3.5 Curbing domestic violence**

The JCPS Cluster mandated the department to chair a task team to draft the strategy to curb domestic violence, and particularly to expand the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998. Resources have been made available for policy and programme development, for outreach and education, training, personnel hire, the 16 Days of Activism of No Violence Against Women and Children Campaign and the establishment of family court centres (2010:1).

The Lower Court Management Committee together with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development listed recommended updates on the 2008 Domestic Violence Act. These were discussed with the judiciary in 2010/11. The Department engaged in research methodology called The 10-Year Review of Implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998, aimed at taking stock of all initiatives and projects in courts and the Criminal Justice System (CJS) to address the reduction and prevention of domestic violence. Electronic forms and systems were developed and approved to be piloted at two magistrates' courts after which they would be rolled out to all magistrates' courts' service points to improve the handling of domestic violence cases.

In rural areas, The Ndabezitha Project with the National Prosecuting Authority, trains traditional leaders and clerks of the court in domestic-violence matters. This includes the development of a safety tool and intersectoral statistical tool by the NPA and the

Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, which was expected to be concluded during 2010/11. A Power Point Presentation given on 12 February 2012 by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development to the select committee on women, children and people with disabilities, on the Implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (act no 99 of 1998), had as its concluding comments:

Though some challenges are being experienced regarding implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998, all the JCPS Cluster strategies and activities relating to fighting Gender-based and Domestic Violence, have started to deliver positive results. Recent Victims of Crime Surveys such as the Stats SA Survey published in November 2011, indicate that victims of crime are beginning to see some results in the fight against crime and the improvement in the treatment of victims. When it comes to sexual offences, 38,4 per cent of victims were victimised by a known community member(s) in the area of residence. In 2010, most incidents of assault (35,7 per cent) occurred at home, while 18,6 per cent occurred in the streets outside offices/shops. More than 90 per cent of the perpetrators of sexual offences used physical force, followed by using a gun (31,5 per cent) and a knife (24,5 per cent) (2012:1).

The Department is in the process of developing a booklet called No More Violence. This aims to teach role players at service points as well as victims how to alleviate domestic-violence matters and the impact of such crimes on their lives.

#### **4.3.5 Identity documents and cross-border security**

In the list of JCPS Cluster outputs (2010), with reference to specific areas of attention, I mention point 7: Securing the integrity of identity and status of citizens and residents. I believe that the registration of births and production of Identity documents should be a high priority as the children at risk are often impeded in justice and interventions because of a lack of documentation. JCPS have addressed this need as stated elsewhere in this document namely through the intention to

include a new regulatory framework by March 2011 to address the late registration of births, and by 2013 to ensure the issue of identity documents to 99 per cent of citizens, 16 years and above, who are in possession of birth certificates. The intention was expressed also to review and implement applicable Civic Services Legislation by 2012 pertaining to births, deaths, citizenship and identification, and by 2013 revised penalties and implementation of revised immigration policy and regulatory frameworks for economic migration and asylum seekers. By 2014 JCPS would aim to increase the percentage of new born children registered before their first birthday from approximately 30 per cent currently to 95 per cent (2010:1).

JCPS also expressed their intention that South Africa's borders will receive priority to improve security. This includes establishing a Border Management Agency (BMA) interim structure by 2011, with effective management of borders under the direction of the Head of the BMA by 2012. The South African National Defence Force, would be progressively deployed to the borders with Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana by 2013, followed by the establishment of a BMA as a single structure by 2014 (2010:1).

The reason I make mention of border control pertains to a discussion I had with a pastor who works with Correctional Services in Gauteng, Bernadette Cotty. She said that children of offenders who are resident outside of South Africa are usually not reunited with their parents because neither the embassies of their countries nor the South African government are prepared to spend the required money to get them back to their parents.

## **5. The African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child**

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (2010) was adopted in July 1990 and enforced on 29 November 1999. AB/LEG/24.9/49 (1990). As of November 2010 forty-five of the total of fifty-three states (eight were still outstanding), had ratified the Charter.

In this thesis we are investigating child abuse and neglect, specifically in South Africa, but as South Africa is part of the Organization of African Unity (AU), and has ratified this Charter, I believe that there are important inclusions that need special

attention. Though many issues are inter-connected, I will investigate specific elements.

The Charter is similar to the South African Bill of Rights' inclusions. Of note are the following: The Charter of the Organization of African Unity recognised the 'paramountcy' of human rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights stated and affirmed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms recognised and guaranteed therein, without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, ethnic group, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national and social origin, economic, birth or other status. The African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child recalled the contents of the Declaration on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child (AHG/ST 4 Rev. 1) adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, at its Sixteenth Ordinary Session in Monrovia, Liberia, from 17 to 20 July 1979, affirming the need to take all appropriate measures to promote and protect the rights and welfare of the African Child. This charter notes with concern that there is still a critical situation among most African children due to the unique factors of their cultural, traditional socio-economic, and developmental circumstances. Mention is made of natural disasters, armed conflicts, cultural, traditional influences, exploitation and hunger. Because of the child's physical and mental immaturity he or she needs special care safeguards.

Another consideration mentioned in the preamble to the African Charter on the rights and Welfare of the Child (2010), is that the child holds a unique and privileged position in the African society. Also mentioned is the fact that for full and harmonious development of his personality, the child should grow up in a family environment in an atmosphere of, love and understanding and 'happiness'. The charter recognises that the child requires particular care of health needs, and development physically, mentally, morally and socially. The child also requires legal protection in conditions of freedom, dignity and security, due to the needs of his mental and physical development.

In the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, adopted in July 1990 and enforced on 29 November 1999, AB/LEG/24.9/49 (1990), mention of cultural

heritage is made in terms of taking into consideration the virtues of their cultural heritage, historical background and the values of the African civilisation. This should inspire and characterise their reflection on the concept of the rights and welfare of the child (defined as a person under the age of eighteen years). There seems to be a discrepancy in the South African context-much Western influence and the new prevailing absence of 'ubuntu', where the local village naturally used to take care of the community's problems, including feeding other family's children if there was need. How do we rebuild the moral fabric of society that has degenerated so much and where values have disappeared? Kevin Chaplin, who took up the position of Managing Director of the Amy Biehl Foundation and the South African Ubuntu Foundation (2006), in October 2006 said,

How do we rebuild the moral fabric of society that has degenerated so much and where values have disappeared? A very real challenge facing nations all over the world. The social challenges prevailing in society require urgent and real attention. Where do we start? Let's go back to basics and instil the spirit of Ubuntu. Ubuntu is an African word for a universal concept. Ubuntu is the potential for being human, to value the good of the community above self interest. Ubuntu is to strive to help people in the spirit of service, to show respect to others and to be honest and trustworthy.

In The South African White Paper on Social Welfare (1996), Ubuntu is officially defined as 'the principle of caring for each other's well-being and as a spirit of mutual support'. Each individual's humanity is ideally expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs in turn through recognition of the individual's humanity. Ubuntu means that people are people through other people. It also acknowledges both the right and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being.

The concluding comments of the preamble of the Charter of African Unity on the rights and welfare of the African child (1996:1) include the responsibilities of performance of the duties of 'everyone'. It reaffirms adherence to the principles of the rights and welfare of the child contained in the declarations, conventions and

other instruments of the Organization of African Unity and of the United Nations and in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the OAU Heads of State and Government's Declaration on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child.

As this study pertains particularly to children in South Africa, I will only mention a few aspects contained in the 'African Charter' (1996), and will concentrate on relevant studies made by the South African Department of Race Relations, and consider the implications arising from these. In this regard, the issue of cultural diversity is a concern, especially when considering those traditions which would be considered abusive to the child, for example female genital mutilation. The African Charter states

3. Any custom, tradition, cultural or religious practice that is inconsistent with the rights, duties and obligations contained in the present Charter shall to the extent of such inconsistency be discouraged.

This is, to my mind, is a major consideration even in South Africa, as it implies conflict with cultures that would have damaging practices.

The statement in Article IV: Best Interests of the Child (1996),

1. In all actions concerning the child undertaken by any person or authority, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration.

can also be very controversial in interpretation. A prime example is the damaging practice of the initiation of young boys (aged thirteen) into manhood. Many die, diseased and hungry and are given damaging potions from sangomas. This is especially true amongst the Xhosa ethnic group for their time of isolation, during which they try to survive in the veld for a period of time. Circumcision is often done in a contaminated environment using rough, unsterilized instruments. Peter Carstens, in an article 'Monster Island', described the initiation process and tradition (1982).

Another issue which is a critical consideration for Christians is abortion, which for me is murder in that the child is a child from conception, not just from birth. Article V: Survival and Development (1996), states,

1. Every child has an inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law.
2. State parties to the present Charter shall ensure, to the maximum extent possible, the survival, protection and development of the child.

Despite these provisions, abortion is common practice in South Africa.

To the South African government's credit, a few years ago, it began to provide anti-retroviral drugs to HIV positive mothers, which has lowered the incidences of HIV babies considerably. According to Statistics South Africa (2011), although infant mortality remains high in South Africa, it has declined steadily since 2003 to a rate of 37.9 per 1000 infants in 2011.

Also tabled by Statistics South Africa (2010), between 1990 and 2001 there had been a severe increase in infant mortality (44 deaths per 1000 infants to 56.9 per 1000 infants). It is noted by the World Health Organization (2011) that in the early 2000's South Africa was one of the few countries in the world where child and maternal mortality had increased.

Another inclusion in the Charter of African Unity on the rights and welfare of the child (1996), which merits comment in terms of South Africa, is Article X: Protection of Privacy, which states,

No child shall be subject to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to attacks upon his honour or reputation, provided that parents or legal guardians shall have the right to exercise reasonable supervision over the conduct of their children. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

There are times when communities take the law into their own hands and participate in criminal acts of revenge, especially for crime such as child rape. This is almost a case of ubuntu in a negative sense—a desire for group vengeance—where often a whole extended family is involved.

Wilson (2001:199-200), in a Cambridge Study in Law and society on community justice, speaks about townships like Boipatong, near Vanderbijlpark, where the neighbourhood courts, or *imbizo*, have a fairly widespread legitimacy, and townships, such as Sharpeville, near Vereeniging, where feuding armed gangs undermine justice structures. Community justice, states Wilson, is unstable, and is reworked by local politics. He stated that the concept of community justice was being reinvented by local residents, primarily in order to cope with a crime wave causing ‘acute problems of social order’. The retributive justice within community undermines official justice structures.

In terms of Article XI: Education 2. c. of the Charter of African Unity(1996:1), on the rights and welfare of the African, ‘the preservation and strengthening of positive African morals, traditional values and cultures’, there are huge cultural differences as displayed by the polygamous lifestyle of South Africa’s President Zuma, who, despite being 70 years of age, celebrated his sixth wedding on 21 April 2012, and now, officially, according to the editor of the *Zambian Watch* on 22 April 2012 (2012), has twenty one children. Some of the children were born out of wedlock and in 2006 he was accused, but not convicted of rape (2006).

Also, in terms of Article XI: Education 2. c. of the Charter of African Unity (1996:1) on the rights and welfare of the child, 6,

State parties to the present Charter shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children who become pregnant before completing their education shall have an opportunity to continue with their education on the basis of their individual ability.

Many political parties are concerned about this problem as this presents questions in the area of moral values of the youth.

In Article 16, Protection Against Child Abuse and Torture, in the Charter of African Unity on the rights and welfare of the child (1996:1), it is stated,

1. State parties to the present Charter shall take specific legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment and especially physical or mental injury or abuse, neglect or maltreatment including sexual abuse, while in the care of a parent, legal guardian or school authority or any other person who has the care of the child.
2. Protective measures under this article shall include effective procedures for the establishment of special monitoring units to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment, and follow-up of instances of child abuse and neglect.

These are excellent in theory, but surely extremely difficult in praxis, in South Africa as in other African countries.

Article 17: Administration of Juvenile Justice (1996), states:

1. Every child accused or found guilty of having infringed penal law shall have the right to special treatment in a manner consistent with the child's sense of dignity and worth and which reinforces the child's respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of others.

This is a sensitive, compassionate statement. If this lofty ideal could be translated into effect in each hurting child's experience. Immense healing and restoration would take place in the individual child's life and in that of his family. This would be one of the goals of this study with respect to the Child in Crisis in South Africa, namely suggested strategies for effective rehabilitation and restoration. In terms of treatment of a child who is involved in a criminal case, there is another statement in The Charter of African Unity on the rights and welfare of the child (1996:1), which also encompasses the goal of this thesis:

3. The essential aim of treatment of every child during the trial and also if found guilty of infringing the penal law shall be his or her reformation, re-integration into his or her family and social rehabilitation.

In terms of protecting the family unit (Article 18), in the Charter of African Unity on the rights and welfare of the child (1996:1), an important point is made concerning dissolution of family: provision shall be made for the necessary protection of the child (Article 19.2), and no child shall be deprived of maintenance because of the circumstances surrounding the parents' marital status (19.3).

In terms of parental responsibilities (Article 20), I highlight an issue which is a focal area of this study:

to ensure that domestic discipline is administered with humanity and in a manner consistent with the inherent dignity of the child (c) (1996:1).

In South Africa, as is common everywhere, abusive, quick-tempered, uncaring parents break the spirit of their children who grow up with poor sense of self-worth.

Article 27: Sexual Exploitation (1996:1), states,

1. State parties to the present Charter shall undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and shall in particular take measures to prevent:

(a) the inducement, coercion or encouragement of a child to engage in any sexual activity;

(b) the use of children in prostitution or other sexual practices;

(c) the use of children in pornographic activities, performances and materials.

This topic is detailed in this study, but is worth quoting as it is a focal area.

Article 28 (1996), deals with drug abuse and specifically mentions that States should take all appropriate measures to protect the child from the use of narcotics, as well as to prevent the use of children in their production and trafficking.

## **6. Drugs in South Africa**

The Anti-doping rules document of 2009, as shown on the AGN website (2012), lists the legal authorities delegated by government to investigate drug abuse, especially in sport, which include The South African Institute for Drug-free Sport (SAIDS), which is often brought into schools when a learner seems to be on drugs, the SAIDS Anti-Doping Appeal Board, and The National Anti-Doping Organization.

One wonders how the schools in South Africa receive their drug supplies, especially in Cape Town, where it is a notable problem, and how many children are actually 'under-cover' agents. Zille (2011), commenting on the school drug problem in a news release on 11 August 2011 (quoted on News24), stated that action would be taken to fight substance abuse among schoolchildren, after 40 grade nine pupils tested positive for drugs at a school outside Cape Town.

Govender (2012) reported on the 'Drug War in schools' on the Timeslive website about a country-wide set of drug and breathalyser tests in hundreds of schools from just prior to Easter and onwards, as there had been 'an alarming increase in drug abuse'. The SA Institute for Drug-Free Sport (SAIDS) had warned it would be testing school rugby players for anabolic steroids. Govender stated that SAIDS, which said doping in schools was now 'beyond serious', would be announcing that two teenagers who took part in Craven Week in 2011, had been banned from competitive sport for two years, after they tested positive for steroids. He stated that from April 2012 SAIDS would be administering at least 1 000 tests for dagga, cocaine and anabolic steroids at 120 schools, at a cost of between R1.3-million and R1.4-million.

Shocking findings of pupils arriving drunk at school, smoking dagga and using illegal steroids have prompted the decision by school principals to conduct tests. One headmaster stated bluntly that if a

pupil looked 'dopey', he would be tested immediately - with harsh consequences if the results came back positive.

The Sunday Times has established that 104 of 433 pupils expelled from schools in five provinces for serious misconduct between April 2010 and last month were booted out for dealing or being in possession of drugs.

A staggering 175 pupils at schools on Gauteng's East Rand tested positive for drugs last month alone, according to the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence's (SANCA) Eastern Gauteng Alcohol and Drug Centre.

And tests conducted at schools mainly in Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State between January and last month by a Johannesburg-based company, Drug Detection International, found that three out of 132 pupils tested positive for anabolic steroids and 21 out of 251 pupils for other drugs.

A snap survey by the Sunday Times this week indicated that pupils' drug of choice was dagga. This is borne out by studies conducted by the SA Medical Research Council's alcohol and drug abuse research unit, which found that dagga was the most common primary substance of abuse for patients younger than 20 years.

Other comments from school principals and members of governing bodies give an idea of the extent of the problem and the measures being adopted by school management to deal with the problem. These extended to blood tests, to counselling and rehabilitation organised by SANCA. One school had even bought a breathalyser kit to test for alcohol intake of aggressive learners. The chief executive of SAIDS, Khalid Galant (2012), said doping was not confined to rugby and athletics. He said

A large number are participating in doping activities for the aesthetic appeal of a bigger and more muscular body. SAIDS was communicating with the World Anti-Doping Agency to seek clarity on

the approach to "in-school testing" so that they do not fall foul of international sports regulations. The first phase of testing will target schools with strong sports traditions, where any teenager can be tested and where they could face a wide range of sanctions.

## **7. Trafficking in South Africa**

In Article 29 (1996): Sale, Trafficking and Abduction, the efforts to prevent child trafficking are listed and include:

- (a) the abduction, the sale of, or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form, by any person including parents or legal guardians of the child;
- (b) the use of children in all forms of begging.

Trafficking of children is definitely a problem in South Africa. SA TV news reported on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2012, KwaZulu-Natal police had broken a human trafficking and child sex ring in Durban. An article in Timeslive (2012) included this report as well as commenting on the often interconnected forms of abuse and trafficking:

KwaZulu-Natal police have busted a human trafficking and child sex ring in Durban, according to news reports. SABC television news reported that Colonel Vincent Mdunge said 16 girls were rescued from the building in the Point area in Durban, eight of them minors. Some of the girls were as young as 12-years-old and some were under the influence of drugs. "We are aware that the girls were captured in different parts of the country and were in transit in Durban. From there they are dispatched to different countries where they are sold for different reasons," Mdunge told the public broadcaster. Some were used as prostitutes and others as drug mules. Four people have been arrested, said Mdunge. Police will now start searching for the girls' families.

The Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill (2012), has been passed by the National Assembly and referred to the National Council of Provinces. The parliamentary monitoring group has asked the Independent Communications

Authority of South Africa (ICASA) to report back to Parliament, within six months, on what it has done to prescribe how Electronic Communication Service Providers must act to try to prevent or limit mobile and internet trafficking. The repatriation of children, as well as adults, who have been trafficked are stated to be part of the responsibilities of the Ministers of Home Affairs and Social Development.

On the IOL news website, Sylvester (2012), reported on the serious levels of trafficking in South Africa:

In 2000, social workers and officers of the Child Protection Unit estimated there were 28 000 child prostitutes in South Africa.

Joan van Niekerk from Childline says they are still trying to assess exactly how many people have been caught up in the human trade. “However, it is a significant problem in South and Southern Africa and is fed by our high levels of poverty, orphanhood and parental irresponsibility,” she says.

Govender reported (2012) that in 2011 a sixteen-year-old Johannesburg teenager told of how she escaped a child trafficking ring. She had been kidnapped in Bramley by four men, was drugged, taken to Khayelitsha where she was raped, beaten, threatened and told she would be put to work as a prostitute. After two months, she managed to escape and was reunited with her family. He reported that organisations had called on Parliament to finalise the Prevention and Combating Trafficking in Persons Bill, also known as the TIP Bill.

Currently offenders are charged with sexual abuse, rape and kidnapping. According to Molo Songololo, a large number of cases gets dismissed in court due to lack of evidence, poor investigations, poor cooperation from witnesses (victims), and the length of the prosecution process. van Niekerk of Childline urges everyone to be vigilant against traffickers. “Be alert – keep an eye on children in your community and, in keeping with the spirit of Ubuntu, see every child as your child,” she explains. “Look out for signs of abuse, bruises and a fear of different people.”

## **8. The State of the South African Family**

At the end of March 2011, The South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) released a report entitled *The First Steps to Healing the South African Family*, outlining the South African family in crisis. This research paper (a booklet) sponsored by the Donaldson Trust, and authored by Lucy Holborn and Gail Eddy, shows the extent of family breakdown in South Africa and the effect this is having on children and the youth. I will report their findings, particularly those which are relevant to the fact that neglect and abuse of children have led to the crisis situation in many South African families.

This report references many other sources for research, a combination of tabulations of existing studies and gathering of some new data on certain issues. Where possible I will cite primary sources for verification purposes, but in some cases, where this is not possible, I will cite the secondary source (in some cases internet searches have revealed some verification).

In the first section, family structure, orphans, child-headed households, problems caused though the absence of a father figure and the effect of poverty on the family are investigated. In the second section South African youth are considered in relation to social breakdown in families. This includes discussion of education and youth unemployment, attitudes to sex and teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, youth involved in violent and criminal activity, use of alcohol and drugs, mental health and perception of self image.

Holborn and Eddy (2011) reveal in this research for SAIRR, areas of crisis in society. I believe that neglect of children in instilling a godly and moral value system has led to much promiscuous behaviour and has increased the vulnerability of children to being targets of people with harmful intentions. Ramifications of neglect and especially in inculcating moral values, has exacerbated amoral behaviour and sexual indulgence outside of marriage. Some consequences, as researched by Holborn and Eddy (2011:1), include the spread of HIV and child pregnancies and resulting increased numbers of orphans and child-headed households. Irresponsible attitudes, especially of absentee men not taking on family responsibilities have also deeply

affected the well-being and health of families. Statistics about the numbers of children in single-parent households reveal the seriousness of the problem. All of this has placed children at risk in many areas, and is affecting their future prospects. Poverty, is also a major ramification of family crisis, and adds to the impact of family breakdown on children.

Nuclear families are not necessarily the norm in South Africa; instead, extended families, as well as care-givers or guardians are common. 'The 'typical' child in South Africa, is raised by their mother in a single-parent household', says Holborn from SAIRR (2011:1). She states that most South African children live in house-holds with unemployed adults.

Holborn and Eddy also mention some unique contributing circumstances that affect the situation and structure of families in South Africa, which include the effects of the migrant labour system from the apartheid era (2011:1). One has to consider the factors that still divide families as men leave their wives to find work, and especially in the field of mining.

The research includes many under-acknowledged influences on children and youth which cause problems, from violent crime to perpetuating the cycle of poverty and the norms and values which many South Africans hold. Social breakdown in terms of residence, communities and social interaction is also discussed (2011:1(76–77[15])).

The Report mentions The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2006:1), which states that of the 9.1 million double orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2005, around 5.2 million (almost 60 per cent) had lost at least one of their parents to AIDS. In addition, without AIDS the total number of double orphans in sub-Saharan Africa would have declined between 1990 and 2010.

According to the University of South Africa, (2008) as cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:1), in 2008 there were 859 000 double orphans, 2 468 000 paternal orphans, and 624 000 maternal orphans. The Profile of Fatal injuries in UNISA's survey (2009/2010) suggests that the levels of violent deaths could partially explain the prevalence of paternal orphans over maternal orphans, and that more than a third (11,314) of non-natural deaths in 2007 were caused by violence, 87 per cent of

which were male. According to the University of Cape Town Children's Institute (2009/2010), South African Child Gauge 2009/2010, some paternal orphans never knew their fathers. A total of 3.95 million children had lost one or both parents by 2008, which is an increase of about a third since 2002. There was an increase of 144 per cent in the number of double orphans.

Holborn and Eddy cite UNICEF (2006:1) as reporting that as at end of 2005 almost half of all orphans, and two-thirds of double orphans in South Africa, were between the ages of 12 and 17 years (2011:1). They also refer to UNICEF's estimation (2007:1), that in 2007, about 2,500,000 children in South Africa had lost one or both parents due to all causes. More than half had lost one or both parents as a result of AIDS. Some 510,000 children had lost both parents due to 'all causes'. Holborn and Eddy state that the Medical Research Council (2002) predicted that by 2015, 5,700,000 children could have lost one or both parents to AIDS, that 3,100,000 children under 18 years would be maternal orphans, and 4,700,000 would be paternal orphans (2011:1).

UNICEF provided a shocking report even as far back as 2006, when it stated that even though the HIV/AIDS infection rate was declining, the number of orphans would continue to grow or remain high for years, reflecting a time lag between HIV infection and death (2006:1). Thus many already infected people would continue to die from full-blown AIDS. Orphaned children would continue being at greater risk of missing out on schooling, would continue living in households with less secure access to food, suffering anxiety and depression, and then also being exposed to HIV infection.

UNICEF stated in the report on vulnerable children (2006:1), that these risks were higher if a mother, rather than a father, died. The study also reflected that it was more likely that widowed mothers would assume responsibility for the care of their children than widowed fathers. This would mean that children who had lost their mothers would be less likely to live with the surviving parent, compared to those who lost a father. UNICEF also said that survival of the youngest children (aged 0–3 years), was at stake when mothers were dying or had recently died. It was nearly four times more likely for them to die in the year before or after their mother's death than those whose mothers were alive and healthy. After the death of one or both

parents the relationship to the caregiver is very important. This study showed that the closer children remain to their biological family, the more likely they are to be cared for well and would be more likely to attend school consistently regardless of their economic (poverty) level.

According to the Department of Basic Education, in 2008 some 481,994 'double orphans' were enrolled in ordinary schools. The SAIRR reported that another 1,661,275 children whose mother or father had died (single orphans constitute 21 per cent of South Africa's children) were enrolled in school that year (2011:2).

A University of Cape Town study (2004) tabled the impact of orphanhood on school performance over several years. The results showed that children whose mother had died were less likely to be enrolled in school, on average had completed fewer years of education, and that less money had been spent on their education than children whose mothers were still alive.

Some statistics quoted in the SAIRR document, though containing a slight variation, show some interesting changes: according to Stats SA 2009, the number of registered civil marriages was down from 176,521 (2004) to 171,989 (2009), the number of registered customary marriages down from 20,301 (2004) to 13,506 (2009), the number of published divorces down from 31,768 (2004) to 30,763 (2009) and those divorces with children 17,214 (56 per cent) (2011:2).

These figures do not necessarily reflect a positive change. With the moral decadence in our country, the fact that there are fewer marriages and divorces on record does not necessarily imply better relationships and faithfulness within marriage; if there are fewer marriages and more 'living together out of wedlock' occurrences, these statistics make sense as well.

Holborn (2011: 2) cites Meintjies (UCT) in the Child Gauge report of Child demography, recording that in 2008 there were 859,000 double orphans, 2,468,000 paternal orphans, and 624,000 maternal orphans, giving a total of 3.95 million (UNICEF giving the number of AIDS orphans as 1.4 million in 2007). UCT puts the number of children in child-headed households as 98,000 (0.5 per cent of all children in South Africa).

According to Statistics SA 2009, the proportion of children with absent, living fathers was up from 42 per cent (1996) to 48 per cent (2009). The division given was: African up from 46 per cent (1996) to 52 per cent (2009); Coloured up from 34 per cent (1996) to 41 per cent (2009); Indian down from 17 per cent (1996 per cent) to 12 per cent (2009); White up from 13 per cent (1996 per cent) to 15 per cent (2009).

The proportion of children with present fathers was down from 49 per cent (1996) to 36 per cent (2009) and the division given was: African: 30 per cent; Coloured: 53 per cent; Indian: 85 per cent and 83 per cent for Whites.

Holborn (2011:2) cites Meintjies (UCT) in the Child Gauge report of Child demography recording that in 2008 in the child survey (0-17), children living with both biological parents constituted 35 per cent, those living with mother only 40 per cent, with father only 2,8 per cent and those with neither biological parent 22,6 per cent. According to Statistics SA 2009, those living with grandparents constituted 8 per cent. They also stated that those living in a household with an employed adult constituted only 34 per cent.

Statistics quoted by TGI (Target Group Index), 2007, gave percentages of urban single parents in each race group as: African-54 per cent, Coloured-30 per cent, Indian-7 per cent, White-24 per cent and All-44 per cent. They stated that urban single parents by age were: 16-24 years-13 per cent, 25-34 years-33 per cent, 35-44 years-24 per cent and 45-64 years-23 per cent. TGI (for global marketing and media surveys) gave the proportion of female urban single parents in each race group as: African-79 per cent, Coloured-84 per cent, Indian-64 per cent and White-69 per cent.

Holborn and Eddy (2011.2), quote from the UCT Child Gauge report (2009/2010) stating that the number of children receiving foster child grants increased by 88 per cent between 2005 and 2009 from 271,817 to 511,479 and mentioned that the grant was increasingly used to provide financial support to caregivers looking after children whose biological parents have died of AIDS. In 2010 this grant was R710 a month, they said.

## 9. Child-headed households

Meintjies, cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011.2), from the UCT Child Gauge report (2009/2010), estimated that in 2008 an 98,000 children (0.5 per cent, of all children) were living in child-headed households (all members being below 18 years of age). This is an improvement on the statistics from 2002, when 118,000 (0.7 per cent) were living in child-headed households. In a South African Parliamentary question (no. 906-7 October 2008), the Department of Social Development stated that between April 2007 and March 2008, some 23,898 child-headed households had received services such as psycho-social support. This support included the follow-up of social grants, from providing food parcels, to more complex issues, helping to access official documents, and linking children with family and relatives.

An investigation into the ramifications of orphan-headed households by Meintjies made some thought-provoking statements. The discrepancy in the numbers of child-headed households receiving aid means that not all children living in child-headed households were receiving assistance from the Department (2010:1). Meintjies noted that there is a usual assumption that in child-headed households neither parent is alive. He quotes from the AIDSCARE journal (2006) that 62 per cent were not orphans and that altogether 92 per cent of the approximately 122,000 children living in child-headed households had one or both parents alive. Some 81 per cent had a living mother. The article expressed the likelihood of parents leaving their children in order to travel to other provinces to find work.

Meintjies, from the Children's Institute at UCT, as quoted by Holborn (2011.2), also said that children in child-headed households are also assumed to have much lower school attendance rates than children living with parents or other caregivers (2010:1). She points out that AIDSCare found that rates of school attendance were only slightly lower for children in child-headed households (95 per cent for child-headed and 96 per cent for mixed-generation households). This to me, is also a very interesting and surprising statistic—showing the 'fight to survive' and have success—a longing that these children have to be educated. With respect to poverty, the statistics do not come as a surprise. Amongst child-headed households 47 per cent

have a monthly household expenditure of less than R400 compared to 15 per cent among mixed-generation households.

## **10. Single Parents**

Holborn and Eddy (2011:3) refer to Acheampong, Yaw, Amoateng and Heaton, who in 2007 highlighted an important fact: urban single parents were mainly African, female, and between the ages of 25 and 34 years. The 1998 South African Demographic and Health Survey showed that 44 per cent of firstborn children were born before their mother had been married. Many urban single parents are unemployed. I believe that this shows that they cannot cope. This is substantiated by the following statistics: According to Acheampong et.al, between 1996 and 2001 all race groups saw a rise in the proportion of households with extended families. Among Africans there was a decline in the proportion of single-parent households, but an increase in the proportion of single parents living with relatives. For all race groups (excluding Whites), there was a decrease in the proportion of households comprising a couple and children. All race groups saw an increase in the proportion of households with couples, children and relatives between 1996 and 2001.

Research conducted in the United Kingdom by the London-based Social Policy Justice Group (2006), shows that single-parent households were two-and-a-half times as likely to be living in poverty as couple-parent households and that the marital status of parents affects whether children will have both parents. Children born to unmarried parents are more likely to live in single-parent households, than those with married parents.

The 2001 South African census, statistics cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:3), showed that only 43 per cent of children aged 0–4 years had both parents in the household, as did 42 per cent of children aged 5–13 years, and 42 per cent aged 14–19 years. The fact that these proportions are low, leads me to conclude that this is not a good basis for stable families in future; often the lifestyle-cycles continue through generations, especially as children think that what they have experienced is the norm. The census also showed significant differences between racial groups. In the age group 0–4 years, 38 per cent of African, 56 per cent of Coloured, 85 per cent

of Indian, and 86 per cent of White children had both parents in the household. Similar trends were evident in the age groups 5–13 years, and 14–19 years. The 2001 census also showed 76 per cent of households to consist of nuclear or extended families. The proportion of nuclear households decreased between 1996 and 2001 from 46 per cent to 40 per cent, while the proportion of households made up of extended families increased from 32 per cent to 36 per cent over the same period.

Rates of marriage and cohabitation also differed significantly between population groups. According to Holborn and Eddy, in 2003 some 21 per cent of Africans were married or co-habiting, compared with 36 per cent of Coloured people, 51 per cent of Indians, and 58 per cent of Whites (2011:3). How sad for children to be born into families where there is no life-long commitment or faithful declaration of nurture and care!

## **11. Absent fathers**

Holborn and Eddy (2011:3) also refer to Richter and Morrell (HSRC), who had earlier discussed a worrying trend that has been revealed by the statistics in this study, namely the increase in the number and proportion of absent, living fathers.

International research conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2006 on the effect fathers have on their children's development, suggests the absence of a father can negatively affect his children's cognitive development, intellectual functioning, and school achievement, as well as the likelihood of experiencing emotional disturbances and depression. They may display 'hyper-masculine' behaviour, including aggression. Girls who grow up without their fathers are more likely to have lower self-esteem, higher levels of risky sexual behaviour, and more difficulties in forming and maintaining romantic relationships later in life. They have more likelihood of having an early pregnancy, bearing children outside marriage, marrying early or getting divorced.

According to Linda Richter (HSRC), as quoted by Holborn and Eddy (2011:4), in a family conference held in Durban in 2005 (particularly focusing on fathers and children), these findings correspond with research from the United States. There it

was found that the absence of fathers when children grow up was one of a variety of factors associated with anti-social behaviour, delinquency, poor educational outcomes and disrupted employment later in life. She spoke about both direct and indirect influence of a father, listing support for the mother as well as influencing all major decisions regarding well-being, health, nutrition, access to health services, and the education of children, including the length of time spent in school. A father directly influences self-confidence in his children, especially among girls, and particularly adjustment and behaviour control among boys (2005:1).

Moboya and Nesengani, in the journal *Adolescence* (1999), mentioned research results which stated that South African secondary school pupils who had their fathers present, outperformed pupils with absent fathers in all subjects (cited by Holborn and Eddy 2011:4). However, Robert Morrell of the HSRC (2006) has argued that data about absent fathers can tell us only so much, as physically absent fathers may still be emotionally present in their children's lives, while physically present fathers can be emotionally absent.

Townsend, citing HSRC (2006), stated that the emotional availability and involvement of a father in a child's life is possibly more important than his actual daily physical presence in the home (Holborn and Eddy 2011:4). Another view in an ethnographic study in Botswana (HSRC 2006) concluded that, 'children are not necessarily disadvantaged by the absence of their father, but they are disadvantaged when they belong to a household missing the usual vital contributions of fathers, such as financial support, access to social position and labour'.

In the research of Holborn and Eddy, they quoted Moboya and Nesengani who, in 1999, stated that whether the parents of children are married or not also affects the father's absence or presence. They cited a study in Soweto and Johannesburg which found that only 20 per cent of fathers who were not married to their child's mother at the time of its birth were still in contact with their children by the time they were 11 years old (2011:4). This is one of the most telling results of this entire study—when there is no formal commitment (a covenant of marriage between the man and wife and before God and the accountability and honour this demands), human nature is such that it is easier and preferable to avoid responsibility, and rather escape

when the going gets rough. This is a major reason for family break-down in South Africa.

The HSRC (UCT), which gives the latest available data about fathers in South Africa, and which is also cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:4), states that the proportion of fathers who are absent and living increased between 1996 and 2009, from 42 per cent to 48 per cent and that over the same period the proportion of fathers who were present decreased from 49 per cent to 36 per cent. Among under-15 year-olds in 2009, African children had the lowest proportion of present fathers at 30 per cent, compared to 53 per cent for Coloured children, 85 per cent for Indians, and 83 per cent for Whites. In this age group, the proportion of African children with absent living fathers increased between 1996 and 2009 from 45 per cent to 52 per cent, and that for Coloured children also increased (from 34 per cent to 41 per cent), and for White children (from 13 per cent to 15 per cent). The only decrease was in the Indian community (17 per cent to 12 per cent). For rural Black children it was 55 per cent and for urban children 43 per cent. Back in 2002 the percentages were 33 per cent rural and 44 per cent urban. I am alarmed to see this huge increase which points to the reality of absent fathers and the crisis for children especially in the Black community. Ainsworth and Filmer (2001) confirm this concern and add that one would assume that the number of absent fathers would decrease as a result of the end of the migrant labour system. The numbers and proportions of children with absent living fathers are increasing among all race groups except Indians. Moreover, they quote a statistic which places South Africa in an exceptionally poor light; out of all countries in southern and eastern Africa, South Africa had the lowest proportion of maternal orphans living with their biological fathers (41 per cent) compared to Zambia (65 per cent), which has the highest proportion, according to data from 1995 and 1996. In contrast, nearly 80 per cent of paternal orphans were living with their mother. This implies that, South Africa had the lowest proportion of fathers looking after their children once their mother had died, in the whole of southern and eastern Africa.

In South Africa, it was estimated by Richter of the HSRC (May 2011) and cited by Holborn (2011:4), that around 54 per cent of men aged 15-49 years were fathers, but that nearly 50 per cent of these fathers did not have daily contact with their children.

Richter rightly adds that men are in crisis in South Africa. She gives as signs of this crisis the fact that many men will not acknowledge their responsibility to support their children and refuse to do so. There are also high rates of physical and sexual abuse, which are perpetrated mainly by men.

Holborn (2011:5) also notes that Richter stated at the Durban Conference on families in 2005, that poverty and high rates of unemployment may contribute to large numbers of fathers failing to take responsibility for their children. This is because they are financially unable to do so. She referred to what Dr Mamphela Ramphele said in a book, *Steering by the Stars: Being Young in South Africa*, that,

Desertion by fathers is often prompted by their inability to bear the burden of being primary providers. The burden of failure becomes intolerable for those who lack the capacity to generate enough income as uneducated and unskilled labourers. Desertion is not always physical, it can also be emotional. Many men 'die' as parents and husbands by indulging [in] alcohol [or] drugs, or becoming unresponsive to their families.

(HSRC have captured this profound statement in their briefing on the 'Fatherhood Project'-2004/2005:1).

In the migratory system of the apartheid era many African men had to come into cities and towns to seek work. They were separated from their families, who were forced to stay behind in homeland areas. Dr Anthony Barker (1970) from rural KwaZulu-Natal and quoted by HSRC said

Economic or even social analysis of migratory labour will fail to reveal the full picture of its cost in terms of human misery. To learn this you must listen to the lonely wife, the anxious mother, the insecure child... It is at family level that most pain is felt, and we cannot forget that African cultural heritage enshrines a broader, more noble concept of family than that of the West... Migratory labour destroys this by taking away for long months together, the father, the brother, the lover and the friend. Each must go, and no one fools themselves that these men can live decent

lives in a sexual vacuum. The resultant promiscuity is but one aspect of the mood of irresponsibility. For your migrant is concerned with nobody but himself; his own survival is the only survival that he can influence by any act that he performs.

A 2009 general household survey is recorded by Statistics South Africa (2010) through records which have revealed that although the laws establishing the migrant labour system have since been repealed, migrancy still exists, even though the migrant labour system laws were repealed. In 2001, approximately 15 per cent of households in South Africa received remittances from migrant workers as a source of income. Thirty-nine percent of female-headed households received remittances as one of their sources of income. This suggests that there are still high numbers of men living and working away from their families.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:5), cite the Fast Facts 2007 (November) and 2009 (July) respectively, which address some concerns about the widespread poverty in South Africa, and particularly for the rural African family, suggesting that the family was vital for the transmission of values essential to inculcating the culture of self-restraint necessary to reduce the crime rate. They also provide many statistics suggesting that the absence of family life for millions of South Africans might well be one of the biggest risks facing the country.

In focusing on the family, Holborn (2011:5) highlights vital considerations listed by UCT Children's Institute South African Child Gauge (2009/2010). About 5.6 million children, just under a third of all children aged between 0 and 17, were living in overcrowded households in 2008 (too many in bedrooms). This was an increase of 33 per cent from 2002 (2010:129). In 2008 only 34 per cent of children under the age of 18 were living in households with an employed adult (2010:106). The Institute reminds the reader that this implies that two thirds of children are growing up living in households in which nobody is employed. Yet, there is a positive report on a decrease in child hunger from 5.2 million (30 per cent) in 2002 to 3.3 million (18 per cent) in 2008 (2010:120) and that the proportion of children living in income poverty has fallen from 77 per cent in 2002 to 64 per cent in 2008 (2010:105).

Holborn and Eddy's SAIRR report (2011:6) notes that the increased Child Support Grant has helped to alleviate poverty for many families who do not have employment. In 2009/10, approximately 9.4 million children received the CSG. In 2010 children under the age of 16 qualified for this grant, but it was reported that the government intended to raise the age threshold to the under-18's by the end of 2012. The 'means test' of caregivers' incomes reported that 82 per cent of children aged 0-13 years were eligible for the grant in 2007(2010:107). The child support grant was currently R250 per month (2011) and was available to caregivers whose income was less than ten times the amount of the grant, i.e., R2500.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:6) cite the social Policy Justice Group (2005), stating that there is evidence of the damage caused by poverty in the lives of children. They recall the fact that research in the UK has found that pregnancy rates among teenage girls living in the most deprived areas are six times higher than among those living in the most affluent areas. Nothing was said about whether this was purely promiscuity or because of birth control.

The Status of the Youth Report (Umsobomvu) (2003:155), stated that 73 per cent of 18-35 year-old South Africans who had a background of childhood poverty (insufficient food and clothes), had never had a job, compared to 41 per cent of those who had a childhood where their family had extra money for things such as luxury goods and holidays.

The SAIRR report of Holborn and Eddy on fractured families shows the severity of the problem. The lack of father interest, dysfunctional families including single parents, large extended families, HIV-affected orphans and child-headed households is an alarming consideration for the youth of the future, especially with the unemployment rate and corruption of 'trusted officials' who are pilfering finance for their own purposes, thus causing the very poverty which they are supposed to alleviate.

A special, righteous intervention is needed. I believe that only intervention through God and biblical values being brought back into our society will change hearts, mindsets and values in South Africa. I look forward to searching for solutions to the neglect and abuse of children in South Africa.

Despite the study of the elements of crisis in South Africa being intensive thus far, I cannot do justice to the study without spending some time on the youth problems in South Africa, which are so well elaborated upon in the section 'Broken families and youth', in the SAIRR report on Fractured Families. I will highlight areas of concern and particularly in the areas of education, unemployment (affecting the well-being of the family particularly), promiscuity, HIV, substance abuse and crime.

Positive transformation is a dire need in our country. Our future adults need God-honouring values which will bring God's own resultant blessing including material help, and as Holborn and Eddy suggest, opportunities for better education, job availability, entrepreneurship and good leaders (2011:4).

## **12. Broken Families and Youth**

### **12.1 Education**

Of great concern is the fact that matriculation pass rates show a decline in recent years, from a high of 73 per cent in 2003 to 61 per cent in 2009, although in 2010 the matriculation pass rate rose again to 68 per cent (SAIRR South Africa Survey 2008/09:420), according to Holborn and Eddy (2011:7).

Holborn and Eddy (2011:7) cite a Department of Education summary report of trends in education (SAIRR survey 2009/2010:384) which states that of the 1 million students who enrolled in Grade 10 in 2007, only 51 per cent wrote the matriculation exam. In 2009, only 31 per cent passed matric. and only 10 per cent received university exemption in their senior certificate. Approximately 9 per cent of 16 year-olds, 15 per cent of 17 year-olds, and 28 per cent of 18 year-olds did not attend school in 2006.

### **12.2 Crime and Violence**

Kganare of COPE (2010) noted that the proportion of young people who have witnessed violence in their community is 51 per cent He also pointed out that 36 per cent of prisoners were under age 25. He specifically looked at the subject of alcohol and stated that the proportion of 12–22 year-olds, who have ever drunk alcohol, was

31 per cent and the number of 12–14 year-olds, who said they could access alcohol easily, was 62 per cent.

### **12.3 Unemployment**

Youth unemployment in South Africa is extraordinarily high. Internal Labour Office Global Employment Trends for Youth: 63 of 2010, states that the 2009 unemployment rate for 15–24 year-olds in sub-Saharan Africa is 12 per cent (lowest being East Asia, at 9 per cent, and highest being North Africa at 24 per cent) cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:8). The latter also note from the SAIRR South African Survey (2009/2010:236) that the unemployment rate for 15–24 year-olds in South Africa in 2009 is 48 per cent) and that by 2010 it had risen to 51 per cent (2009/2010: 222), the highest being among young African women at 63 per cent (2011:8).

I note when comparing the unemployment rates with even the highest in North Africa at 24 per cent, that 48 per cent for South Africa is double—a cause for serious concern.

The statistics for older people, as given below, are still relevant to the study, as many in this age bracket are parents and the figures show the likelihood of gross neglect of family members due to the resultant poverty.

The Status of the Youth Report - Usombomvu (2003:86), mentions that only 56 per cent of young people surveyed in 2003 received career guidance at school and that only 50 per cent of African pupils received career guidance at school compared with 91 per cent of white pupils. Approximately 68 per cent of 18–35 year-olds surveyed in 2003 had never had a job. Of those who had had a job, about 32 per cent started off working in the informal sector. Holborn and Gail Eddy cite The State of the Nation Report of 2003 (SAIRR 2005:108;128), which states that in addition, there were 3.3 million 15–24 year-olds (33 per cent) not in employment, education, or training (NEET).

I attended the SAIRR Seminar on Fractured Families held in Johannesburg in March 2011). There Holborn reported that career counselling is poor at both schools and

universities and that initiatives to invite successful alumni to speak to current students and pupils about sensible subject and career choices could help to bridge this gap (2011:4). She said

The effects of so many young people being without something to occupy them on a daily basis, be it education, training, or work, are likely to be significant. Combined with the effects of growing up in broken families, problems such as teenage pregnancy, HIV/ AIDS, drug and alcohol abuse.

#### **12.4 Sex**

According to Richter (2006:59–60), as cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:9), one potential outcome of large numbers of unoccupied young people, especially those from dysfunctional families, is that they are more likely to be involved in risky sexual behaviour, including unprotected sex with multiple partners. When growing up in single-parent households, the absence of a parent can have a significant effect on the young person's attitude to relationships and sex.

International research confirms that girls who grow up with their fathers are more likely to have better self-esteem, less risky sexual risk behaviour, and fewer difficulties in forming and maintaining romantic relationships in later life. Also, they are less likely to have an early pregnancy (especially out of wedlock), bear children outside marriage, marry at a young age, or get divorced. As an example, British research done by the Social Policy Justice group (2006:45), and cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:9) states that teenage sexual activity is much more widespread among children from single parent, divorced and separated homes.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:9) refer fairly extensively to research published by the Children's Institute of South Africa *Child Gauge* 2009/10, which reports the results of two surveys. The 2008 National Youth Lifestyle Study, published by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, states that 39 per cent of 12–22 year-olds reported ever having had sex, and the Children's Institute's *Child Gauge* recorded that 43 per cent of those aged between 15 and 19 years had had sex. The sexual risk behaviour of those who are sexually active is of great concern. Some 32 per cent of the youths

who reported that they had had sex in the lifestyle study had had four or more sexual partners in their lifetime. The report states that in a study of Grade 8–11 pupils, 41 per cent of those that were sexually active had had three or more sexual partners, and 52 per cent reported having had more than one sexual partner in the previous three months. Also many young people are also starting to have sex at a very young age. Approximately 55 per cent of sexually active respondents in the lifestyle study reported that they had had sex before they were 15, although figures published by the Children’s Institute are somewhat lower at 28 per cent for men and 16 per cent for women. Also, as many as 17 per cent of the sexually active young people in the lifestyle study reported using alcohol or drugs before having sex.

The report adds that tracking this behaviour is important as research by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention has found a link between alcohol and drug use prior to sex as well as early initiation of sexual activity and lower rates of consistent condom use, which among 15–19 year-olds has been estimated at 74 per cent for men and 49 per cent for women. UNICEF (2010:67), reported that among 15–24 year-olds it was 72 per cent for men and 52 per cent for women.

### **12.5 Teenage parenthood**

According to the HSRC (2008) cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:10), in order to devise strategies to bring down levels of HIV transmission and unwanted pregnancy among young people it is important to keep track of levels of condom use. Teenage fertility rates (ability to conceive children and resulting in the birth of babies), have actually declined in South Africa overall since the late 1980’s, although, according to the World Bank Development indicators (2010), in 2008 the fertility rate for this age group rose to 58. Their comment is that teenage pregnancy in South Africa is nevertheless high and even although South Africa’s adolescent fertility rate is half that of the average for sub-Saharan Africa, it is three times higher than the average rate in East Asia and four times higher than the average European rate. The HSRC (2008) reported that in 1987–89 the average fertility rate among 15–19 year-olds was 124 births per 1 000 women, a rate which fell to 81 in 1998 and again to 54 in 2003.

Statistics from the Department of Education in *The Status of the Youth Report – Usombomvu* (2003:26), clearly suggest that pregnancy in schools is becoming more of a problem. In 2007, nearly 50 000 school pupils fell pregnant, which was a 151 per cent increase since 2003. Approximately 53 pupils in Grade 3 became pregnant during 2007. Thirty-nine per cent of girls, who dropped out of school, and were surveyed in 2001, cited becoming pregnant or having a baby as the most important reason for leaving school before they could matriculate. This reason was even more common than being unable to pay school fees. The report cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:10) notes that approximately 54 per cent of 14–22 year-old young men who dropped out of school, and who were surveyed in KwaZulu-Natal, said that they had left school because of fathering a child.

Harrison (2008:2–4) reminds us that teenage pregnancy statistics given for schoolchildren do not account for the pregnancies which are more likely to occur after school drop-out (as researched by ‘Lovelife’). Girls aged 17–19 account for 93 per cent of pregnancies among 15–19 year-olds (2011:10).

*The Status of the Youth Report–Usombomvu* (2003:33) suggests that the Child Support Grant (CSG) is serving as an incentive for young women to become pregnant. The teenage fertility rate has declined since the CSG was introduced in 1996, may raise a question about this theory. Approximately 70 per cent of women aged 18–35 who had ever been pregnant said that their pregnancy was unplanned.

A Parliamentary Question on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2007 noted that the number of abortions among under-18 year-olds rose by 124 per cent from 4 432 in 2001 to 9 895 in 2006. The report urges more research to be done in reducing the stigma associated with abortion, the availability of abortion, and the increased sexual activity at a young age. It mentions the importance of researching further into early parenthood, before young people have completed their education or entered the job market, the fact that 65 per cent of children live without both parents, and the effect this has on young people’s relationships and sexual activity. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) has warned in the Round Table Youth Policy initiative 5 (2007:1): ‘Young mothers begin a lifelong trajectory of poverty for themselves and their children through truncated educational opportunities and poor job prospects’.

The Children's Institute of South Africa Child Gauge 2009/10 cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:10), suggests that problems facing teenage parents are likely to be passed on to their children, as research in the United Kingdom shows that women born to teenage mothers are twice as likely to have a child as a teenager themselves.

## **12.6 HIV/AIDS**

According to the TGI Survey (2007) high numbers of young people falling pregnant indicates that many young people are having unprotected sex, which has a bearing on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. (Only Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland had higher youth HIV prevalence rates than South Africa at that stage.) The incidence of HIV was much higher among 15–24 year-old women than men—12.7 per cent compared with 4.0 per cent. According to Holborn and Eddy, in their State of the Nation Report, the Social Policy Justice Group stated that despite this, the HIV prevalence rate among 15–24 year-olds has decreased from 9.3 per cent in 2002 to 8.7 per cent in 2008 (2011:11).

Meintjies (2010), from the Children's Institute at UCT states that of the HIV-positive children in need of treatment under the age of 15, the proportion receiving antiretroviral treatment has increased from 2 per cent in 2002/03 to 37 per cent in 2007/08 (2011:11). To substantiate this information, Holborn added that at the end of 2008 UNICEF estimated that this figure was even higher at 61 per cent and that accurate knowledge about prevention of the transmission of HIV among 15–24 year-olds has actually gone down from 66 per cent in 2005 to 42 per cent in 2008 (2011:10). I believe that statistics like this show neglect of ensuring that schools transmit this information.

In order to give a balanced picture of the situation, Holborn (2011:10) references parliamentary question 906 on 7th October 2008 where some positive statistics were mentioned. Seventy-seven per cent of men and 80 per cent of women believe that people should wait until they are married to have sex. About 80 per cent also said that sexually active young men and women who are not married should have sex with only one partner. These opinions of the youth are despite high levels of

behaviour which risks teenage parenthood, HIV infection, and other sexually transmitted diseases.

The second statistic shows an unwillingness to address the root cause, which should be to abstain from pre-marital sexual activity as biblical values clearly teach.

In a National Youth Victimization Study (2006:43,46,60 and 62) cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:10), it was reported that many young people appear to live in fear of sexual violence. Fifty-five per cent of women aged 12–22 years say that they are afraid of being raped or sexually assaulted. Holborn argues that this is not unfounded. Just over one in 25 people in the same age group had been sexually assaulted or raped in the last 12 months when surveyed in 2005, and 42 per cent of these assaults occurred either at school or at home. In only 11 per cent of these cases did the respondent say they had reported the assault to the police. She notes that UCT Centre for Social Science Research (2006:221) reported that one third of schoolgirls surveyed in southern Johannesburg had experienced sexual harassment.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:11), refer to several newspapers reporting sexual violence for example that sometimes students are sexually assaulted at school by teachers or fellow pupils (Mail and Guardian 15th and 21st October 2010). For South Africans such accounts have become commonplace.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:11) also cite the UCT Child Gauge report (2009/2010), which stated in 2008 that approximately 40 per cent of police dockets on rape in Gauteng indicate that the victims are children. The majority of cases involving child victims were perpetrated by men known to the victims. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, when discussing the resilience youth have in terms of crime levels in South Africa (2009:84), pointed to the fact that there is also a link between other delinquent behaviour, such as youth crime, and attitudes to sex (especially in males). A survey asking young offenders about their attitudes to sex indicated that 31 per cent thought it acceptable for a man to force a woman to have sex with him if she is wearing revealing clothing. Approximately 20 per cent thought that if a young man gets an erection it is a sign that he must have sex with someone. Eleven per cent of the young offenders considered favours such as buying someone a drink, or taking them on a date entitled them to have sex with that person.

As I consider all of these facts I just see the abuse of a person's dignity and the undermining of the potential to be a stable adult, one who is capable of being a good spouse or parent. This is far cry from God's plan for the people He created as is expressed in Jeremiah 29:11 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope' (ESV).

## **12.7 Violence and crime**

The statistics quoted by Holborn and Eddy in their research on violence and crime in South Africa, again shows that South Africa is in a state of crisis—the ramifications for whole families who are subjected to violence and crime are serious, as they rightly point out (2011:11). The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation in reporting on the tackling of armed violence (2010:51), note that many young people are exposed to sexual violence, that they perpetrate violence against their partners and peers, and simultaneously are vulnerable to being the victims of crime themselves. A shocking consideration is the report that a recent study into violent crime had described the normalisation of violence in South African society and that this in itself had contributed to a culture of violence.

Another thought-provoking comment (cited by Holborn and Eddy 2011:11), from The UCT Child Gauge report (2009/2010), stated that in 2008, as families play a vital role in socialising young people, the large numbers of dysfunctional families and the prevalence of verbal and physical fighting as normal interaction, are actually damaging to healthy social behaviour expectations. Even violence between young people in romantic relationships seems to be surprisingly common. Also, in a study of Grade 8–11 pupils in Cape Town, 21 per cent admitted to perpetrating violence against their partner, and 16 per cent said they would consider future violent behaviour against their partner if angered (2008:54).

Holborn and Eddy (2011:11) cite Umsobomvu Youth Fund and HSRC in their Status of the Youth Report (2003:221), which concurred with this information. In a study conducted of Grade 9–12 pupils at seven high schools in Eldorado Park (Johannesburg), approximately half of them said they had been either the perpetrator or the victim of violence in a romantic relationship in the previous 12 months. The authors went on to cite the centre of Justice and Crime Prevention

(2008), which reported in its lifestyle study that approximately 26 per cent of those who had been assaulted had been attacked by their boyfriend or girlfriend, that 7 per cent of 12–22 year-olds had been hit, slapped, or physically pushed by their romantic partner (higher than in the older age groups), 11 per cent of 18-20 year-olds and 10 per cent of 21–22 year-olds. Approximately 32 per cent of physical attacks at home were with a weapon and over half of the incidents of domestic violence witnessed by young people had been preceded by the consumption of alcohol or drugs. However, violence in the homes of young people seems to have declined slightly in the last few years.

In a report from the Southern Africa Trust (2010:55), cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:11), many children and young people witness regular violence in their homes, but they are also exposed to it at school. In a survey of over 5000 schools in Cape Town and Durban, it was reported that nearly one in five Grade 8-11 learners had been victims of bullying and nearly one in ten admitted that they had bullied other pupils. The lifestyle study also reported that 8 per cent of primary school pupils reported being the victim of some sort of assault in the last 12 months, and in 51 per cent of these cases, teachers were found to be responsible (2010:79).

Holborn and Eddy (2011:11) also cite The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention in their reports *How Rich the Rewards?* (30,35), and *Running Nowhere Fast*, which provide the following statistics:

**Violence witnessed by young people in their homes**

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2008</b>
Family member have regular arguments	26 per cent	18 per cent
When angry family member become physical	12 per cent	7 per cent
Young people receive physical punishment from family	27 per cent	24 per cent

The Status of the Youth Report -Usombomvu (2005:155), states that physical punishment seems to remain common in schools, with 52 per cent of respondents in the lifestyle study stating that they had been physically punished by teachers or principals, despite it having been outlawed by the South African Schools Act of 1996.

There is specific comment in the report, according to Holborn and Eddy (2011:12) on the fact that many young people also grow up witnessing violence and criminal activity in their communities as well as at home and at school. Approximately 51 per cent of young respondents in the lifestyle study said they had witnessed people in their communities intentionally harm one another. In 83 per cent of cases, where young people had been the victim of assault, they knew the perpetrator well—in 40 per cent of cases it was a member of the community. More than 50 per cent of all respondents described their neighbourhood as having many fights (54 per cent) and much crime (50 per cent).

The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention report *Running Nowhere Fast* includes some shocking statistics on community crime ('ubuntu' again seems not only to be lacking, but the pendulum seems to have swung towards the community being an unsafe group with which to associate). Holborn and Eddy quote these statistics which include: Approximately 34 per cent of 12–22 year-olds were personally acquainted with somebody in their community who had committed a crime. Thirty-three per cent of them knew somebody in their community who made a living out of criminal activities (2011:12). The lifestyle study reported that one in six youths had family members who had been in jail, and nearly one in ten reported having adult family members who had done something to get them in trouble with the police in the previous 12 months. Nearly 4 per cent reported that they had family members that were using drugs and 2 per cent had family members who dealt drugs or sold drugs. Approximately 44 per cent knew community members who had been to jail.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:12), remind us of the close proximity in which many young people live to criminal offenders, thus making it more likely that young people are at risk of being the victims of crime. The youth victimisation rate, according to the lifestyle report, is almost double that of adults. Between September 2004 and 2005 two out of five South Africans between the ages of 12 and 22 were the victims of

crime. They mention that more than 75 per cent of young victims of assault received no support or counselling after being attacked as is reported by The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention in *Running Nowhere Fast*.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:12) reported that although youth victimisation has declined over the last few years (as is the case with general victimisation rates), young people are influenced towards committing crime themselves as they may grow up knowing people engaged in crime, witness criminal activity or be crime victims themselves. Although many young people witness violence in their own homes and in their communities, 74 per cent of the lifestyle study respondents said that they believed adults and others set a good example for them to follow. Young people who had seen family members intentionally hurt one another were twice as likely to have been in a fight, three times more likely to have carried weapons, and four times more likely to have threatened or injured someone with a weapon than youths who came from non-violent homes. Holborn and Eddy draw attention to the fact that the study stated that those who had witnessed violence in their community were three times more likely to have carried weapons and also been in a fight, and four times more likely to have threatened someone with a weapon. Young people, who had at any stage been assaulted, were 12 times more likely to have been involved in physical fights. They were also four times more likely to have carried weapons in the previous year, and seven times more likely to have threatened or injured someone. Crime victims also reported significantly higher rates of perpetrating violent behaviour.

The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, *How rich the rewards?* report (2006:32), cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:12), points out that a third of young people think that it would be acceptable to physically attack somebody who had assaulted them in the past if the opportunity arose. From the same institution's report, *Walking the Tight Rope* (2009:34–39), Holborn and Eddy (2011:12) note that family violence appears to be a major contributing factor to youth crime. In a South African study which compared young offenders and young non-offenders, 27 per cent of the offenders said that people in their family sometimes hit each other (as opposed to 9 per cent of the non-offenders). Approximately 21 per cent of young offenders had adult family members who had sold drugs (as opposed to 5 per cent of the non-offenders). Thirty-seven per cent of offenders said that someone in their

family had done something that could get them in trouble with the law (as opposed to 10 per cent of the non-offenders).

This study compared youth offenders versus non-offenders:

**Factors differentiating youth offenders from youth non-offenders**

	<b>Offenders</b>	<b>Non-offenders</b>
Family members hitting each other at times	27 per cent	9 per cent
Adult family members who have sold drugs	21 per cent	5 per cent
Family members having escaped prosecution	37 per cent	10 per cent
Completed matric	4 per cent	12 per cent
Having received physical punishment from teachers	73 per cent	56 per cent
Having been threatened, scared, or harmed at school	26 per cent	11 per cent
Having been a crime victim	77 per cent	28 per cent
Where family members have been crime victims	57 per cent	35 per cent

(2006:8,34-39,60,62,63)

These researchers (2011:13) proceed to quote from the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, *Walking the Tight Rope* (2009:8), that U.S. research suggests that

young people who have come from a home environment 'characterised by supportive and affectionate parents or caregivers who closely supervise and regulate where and how their children spend their time' are less likely to be involved with crime (i.e. more resilient to crime) than those having been exposed to criminal or violent 'role models'. Holborn and Eddy continue to expand upon this information (2011:13) by noting that offenders are suggested to have had emotional and financial deprivation from their fathers and spent little time with their mothers, which is not the case with non-offenders. The largest proportion (24 per cent) of parents of offenders admitted to spending almost no time with their children on a daily basis, whereas the largest proportion (37 per cent) of parents of non-offenders stated that they spent four hours or more per day with their children (2009:34–39). Holborn and Eddy add (2011:13) that the study showed that the lack of education affects crime; only 4 per cent of young offenders had completed Grade 12 compared with 12 per cent of non-offending young people (2009:60).

They point out that the study (2009:55;77) stated that poverty is not a factor in youth resilience to crime. Non-offending young people experienced similar levels of poverty when growing up to those who became offenders. A question arose concerning boredom influencing young people to turn to crime. Except in the case of libraries and shops, young offenders were more likely than non-offenders to use various facilities within their area. These included sports grounds, community halls, shebeens or pubs and even places of worship. Also, young offenders (more than non-offenders), were also significantly more likely to participate in social groups such as youth groups, sports teams, and choirs.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:13) cite the Department of Correctional Services in the SAIRR South African survey (2009/2010:693) which stated that it is important to understand why so many young people turn to crime. Approximately 36 per cent of the total prison population (including those awaiting trial) is under the age of 25. They substantiate this report (2011:13) by adding reference to the Umsobomvu Youth Fund and HSRC The Status of the Youth Report (2003:693), which mentions the many young offenders that are not listed in these statistics because they are given non-custodial sentences. Those aged 18–24 years make up about 14 per cent of the prison population, yet according to a study of those arrested at 146 police

stations across the country in 2000, 31 per cent are in that age category. Holborn and Eddy mention that in the Southern Africa Trust (2010:59), though many young people are not criminals, crime affects many. Between 2001 and 2005 in six areas with high rates of murder, 62 per cent of murders had both victims and suspects that were aged 15–34 years old and that one in two non-natural deaths of 15–24 year-olds in South Africa was the result of violence (2011:21).

### **12.8 Drug and alcohol use**

Holborn and Eddy (2011:13), continue their study on brokenness in families (particularly in youth), by referring to The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention report *Walking the tightrope* (2009:69), citing clear evidence to show that drinking alcohol and using drugs have strong links to youth crime and rates of victimisation. Approximately 57 per cent of young offenders were under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they committed the offence for which they were imprisoned. A significant difference between alcohol and drug use among young offenders and young non-offenders is shown through research reported here. In this same study (2009:69), the statistics on the South African Family, alcohol and drug abuse in the lives of young offenders versus young non-offenders is tabled below:

#### **Drug and alcohol use among young offenders versus young non-offenders**

<b>Substance</b>	<b>Offenders</b>	<b>Non-offenders</b>
Alcohol	82 per cent	31 per cent
Marijuana	61 per cent	5 per cent
Cocaine	14 per cent	0.3 per cent
Mandrax	29 per cent	0 per cent

The study also reports that more than one in twenty young people had used marijuana. Approximately 8 per cent said that they had used drugs to forget their troubles. 27 per cent of those who had used drugs said they had done so because their friends used drugs.

I believe that it is important to comment on the huge influence friends have on peer behaviour so it is even more important for parents or carers to ensure that they have some say in the kind of friends their children have, and where they go with them.

Holborn and Gail Eddy (2011:13) refer to the report of the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, *Running nowhere fast* (2009), which adds that 11 per cent of young people were under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they were the victim of assault. Their comment is that this substance abuse makes them engage in activities that put them at risk of being the victim (or perpetrator) of a crime. Approximately 31 per cent of those surveyed in the lifestyle study reported having had alcohol. Their comment is that may sound relatively low considering the age range was 12–22 years, but as many as 35 per cent had their first drink aged 14 or younger. Approximately 3 per cent said they drank because they were actual alcoholics, 14 per cent because they wanted to get drunk, 18 per cent drank because their friends drank and 20 per cent said they drank to relieve boredom.

As I contemplate these statistics it is clear that controls and value systems are missing in these young lives—the fact that 35 per cent drank alcohol at primary school age is really a shocking reflection on uncaring parents.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:13) also cite statistics from UCT Children’s Institute, South Africa Child Gauge 2009/2010 which I have tabulated as follows:

	<b>Mandrax</b>	<b>Cocaine</b>	<b>Heroin</b>	<b>Alcohol</b>	<b>Marijuana</b>	<b>Crack cocaine</b>	<b>Tik (Crystal Methamphetamine)</b>
<b>Secondary School Youth Comments</b>	7 per cent had used it	7 per cent had used it	6 per cent had used it	73 per cent had easy access	36 per cent easy access	9.1 per cent easy access	4.7 per cent easy access
<b>12-14 year- olds comments</b>				62 per cent had easy access	26 per cent easy access		5 per cent easy access

Holborn and Eddy (2011:13), quote from the SAIRR survey 2009/2010 (270), which states that it is not necessarily the case that poorer communities have more alcohol and drug abuse amongst youth. They argue that to a certain extent, looking at alcohol and drug use among the different race groups illustrates this lack of clarity given that only 4 per cent of white people live in poverty compared to 15 per cent of Indians, 36 per cent of coloured people, and 64 per cent of Africans.

In looking further into the racial prevalence of drug-taking, Holborn and Eddy (2011:13) reference The Status of the Youth Report (Umsobomvu) (2003:183), which showed the results of a study among university students and which found that the use of all types of drugs was significantly higher for white students than for students of other races. I have tabulated the results of The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention: Running Nowhere Fast (2009) lifestyle study according to race group and access of substances for youths.

<b>Whites</b>	<b>Indians</b>	<b>Coloureds</b>	<b>Africans</b>
Marijuana use greatest; most likely to have consumed alcohol in the previous month	Crack cocaine most easily accessed	Marijuana and tik most easily accessed	Alcohol most easily accessed; binge drinking most prevalent

**Type of substance abuse by race**

Holborn and Eddy (2011:13) refer to UCT Children's Institute, South Africa Child Gauge 2009/2010 (54), which suggests that it is likely that drug and alcohol use affects young people across all races and backgrounds in one way or another.

Though many young people use drugs or alcohol, many are also aware of its harmful effects. Almost 95 per cent of respondents in the lifestyle study said that drinking too much was harmful to one's health, 92 per cent thought drinking makes people violent, and 83 per cent thought that drunk people are unpleasant to be around.

Despite these overwhelming majorities, a significant proportion of young people still use drugs and alcohol. Also many youth believe they can have beneficial effects, such as helping them to relax, to calm nerves, and helping them forget their troubles. I quote from the report (2011:14):

There is clear evidence that the abuse of alcohol and drugs has a negative effect on young people, and that it is likely to contribute to victimisation rates, youth offence rates, school drop-out rates, and mental health problems. For example, a study of just over 1 500 Grade 8-10 pupils in Cape Town found that those who reported using tik had higher rates of aggression, depression, and generic mental health problems.

Holborn and Eddy (2011:14) suggest that mental health problems such as depression are also causing young people to use alcohol and drugs.

### **12.9 Mental health problems**

For a thorough investigation of the problems youth encounter, even though only a minority are classified to have mental problems, the study does need to allude to this issue. Consequently Holborn and Eddy investigated this aspect (2011:14). The UCT Children's Institute, South Africa Child Gauge 2009/2010 (53) reported on a survey conducted in the Western Cape which found that 17 per cent of children and adolescents suffer from psychiatric problems, which included attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (5 per cent), post-traumatic stress disorder (8 per cent) and major depressive disorder (8 per cent).

Umsobomvu Youth Fund and HSRC South African Child Gauge in the lifestyle study (2003:185), cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:14), confirm that significant proportions of young people suffer from low self-esteem and mental health issues.

Approximately 26 per cent of those surveyed said they had suffered such severe or lengthy times of depression in the previous year that they stopped doing their usual activities (highest rates being post teens at 37 per cent). One in 20 had considered suicide in their depression. Of these 75 per cent had even devised a suicide plan, 46 per cent had attempted suicide once and 32 per cent had attempted suicide twice or more. Those who had experienced violence in their homes or communities were significantly more likely to feel depressed or suicidal.

Nduna, Mzikazi et al. (2010), also cited by Holborn and Eddy (2011:14), reported in the *Journal of Child and Family Studies* (volume 13) on a study of about 2000 15–26 year-olds in the Eastern Cape. It was found that 21 per cent of young women and 14 per cent of young men had depressive symptoms. The study, Keller et al. (1991:12:44–48), also found a positive correlation between the levels of depression and levels of sexually risky behaviour. It was recommended that HIV prevention efforts need to include the promotion of adolescent mental health. Academic research conducted in South Africa suggests that young people living without their mothers are more likely to be depressed. Holborn and Eddy (14) noted that undisclosed paternal identity also causes adolescents significant emotional distress.

In Keller's study in the Eastern Cape (1991: 41–45), which included testing the hypothesis that baseline depressive symptomatology was associated with sexual risk (12), the separate logistic regression models included the variables of socio-economic status, experiences of childhood adversity, alcohol abuse and education.

The results indicated that, women with depressed symptomatology were more likely to be in highly controlling relationships, where the partner was three or more years older and had experienced two or more lifetime episodes of physical or sexual intimate partner violence. The woman was more likely to have successively more risky sexual behaviour and worse depression if she had had two or more episodes of physical or sexual violation and having a partner three or more years older. Women prostitutes (transactional sex) who had had two or more instances of sexual violence

within a year were also likely to show more serious depression. Among men, who visited prostitutes or had raped a woman or perpetrated other violence it was shown that they were also more likely to experience severe depression.

Their findings showed that depressive symptoms are associated with behaviours and relationship characteristics that put young South African women and men at risk for sexually transmitted HIV.

Intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration were also associated with depressed symptoms. It is known that, for women, being in an abusive relationship causes depression (1991:46,47), and their prospective findings showed that a depressive state predicted vulnerability to abuse and to a controlling partner, a situation that is likely to generate more depressive symptoms.

One is left asking of that society, where are moral teachings? Where are caring parents? Where are God-honouring values and relationships of sexual integrity-virginity until marriage? If one's body is a commodity, where is the value of the person? It is no wonder that depression features in the lives of children and young people.

It makes sense to conclude at the end of this discussion about mental ill health, that lack of caring nurturing parents contributes to mental health problems among children and young people. I believe that the whole issue of neglect and abuse (especially emotional abuse in this case)—the lack of a sense of love, care and support in the home, can damage the mental health of a young person.

### **12.10 Young citizens**

Holborn and Eddy (2011:14) quoted statistics from the Umsobomvu Youth Fund and HSRC The Status of the Youth Report (2003:235–236). In a survey of Gauteng high school pupils on civic engagement, 32 per cent said that they agreed with the statement, 'I wish that we still lived in the old South Africa' (29 per cent of African pupils and 44 per cent of White pupils). Twenty-five per cent of African respondents said they would like to leave South Africa because they disliked the way in which the Government was run.

About 45 per cent of all pupils surveyed said that they felt other race groups had more advantages than they did. Of all the respondents, only 20 per cent said that they believed that they could usually trust other people. Approximately 43 per cent agreed with the statement, 'Government does not care what you think'. About 61 per cent thought that 'people who run the country are not really concerned with what happens to you'.

Many pupils expressed disillusionment with economic prospects. Approximately 77 per cent said that they would struggle to find a good job, no matter how good their level of education. Some 61 per cent felt that school-leavers of 1990 would have found it easier to find jobs than they would, and 47 per cent stated that they were worried that members of their family that were employed would lose their job in the next year.

This information on young citizens shows civil neglect carried through to families. I believe that much of the material help which should be made available in job creation has not been adequately addressed. In addition we have the high levels of provincial corruption which compound the problem. There has, however, been a concerted effort to charge defrauders in recent months.

### **13. The way forward**

Holborn and Eddy (2011:14) discuss the way forward as follows:

Many young people in South Africa grow up taking many risks, in their sexual behaviour, in their use of drugs and alcohol, and in their resort to violence and crime. They also face many challenges, including high unemployment, poor education, and poverty. While not all these problems can be explained by family breakdown, both local and international research provides evidence that growing up in stable families with both parents present can make a significant difference to the future outcomes of young people. When only 35 per cent of children grow up living with both of their biological parents, we should be alert to the risk that dysfunctional families are damaging the prospects of our younger generations. Moreover,

there is evidence that people from broken families are more likely to go on to have relationship problems and create fractured families themselves. This is a cycle that needs to be broken.

Research clearly confirms that the South African family is in crisis. I have no hesitation in agreeing that there is a serious lack of stability in the South African family, as so many families are dysfunctional. As a result, there are many children who are suffering neglect as well as abuse. The begging question is 'How many children and youth do not experience parental care, love, security and significance, and will carry this over into their adult experience and in perpetuity?'

I refer to the content of two emails from well-respected public figures, one from Pastor Errol Naidoo, the director for Family Policy Institute South Africa (FPI), which acts as the Christian voice to government and the media, lobbying on current issues that concern Christians. The other is from Melanie Phillips, a British journalist and author, best known for her controversial column about political and social issues which currently appears in the Daily Mail (awarded the Orwell Prize for journalism in 1996), and author of *All Must Have Prizes*, an acclaimed study of Britain's educational and moral crisis.

Errol Naidoo in his article 'The Media's Attack on Children!' states

While flipping through the television channels on Monday night (30 April), I inadvertently came across a series of adverts on E-TV providing porn SMS services to anyone with a cell-phone.

Although it was flighted after 22h00, the fact that the next day was a public holiday and thousands of children were probably awake, made the hard core explicitness of the ads deeply disturbing.

A few years ago the media broke the news that children as young as 8 were downloading hard-core sexually explicit images to their cell-phones and sharing it with their friends.

The sharing of these pornographic images between minors eventually led to “sexting” in which children produced their own sex video-clips and shared these child-porn images with friends.

As a result, child-on-child sexual abuse skyrocketed in South Africa and remains a major concern.

Errol had launched a campaign against E-TV’s pornographic ads which resulted in the WASPA Code of Conduct agreement between SA broadcasters and the cell-phone service providers, but commented on the fact that E-TV still continues to ‘exploit the lack of broadcasting regulations to broadcast the most appalling sexually demeaning ads to millions of curious children’.

Naidoo, in this Watchman on the Wall Pastors Portal posting in 2011, stated that The Advertising Standards Authority and the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of SA support E-TV’s ‘right’ to broadcast pornographic adverts on late night TV, provided the ads are flighted after the “watershed” of 21h30. I agree with him that this actual self-regulation helps the media to “justify their shocking behaviour”. He states

Over the past decade, many reports emerged of minor children engaged in sexual abuse of other children following exposure to pornographic images on E-TV and other channels. This morally reprehensible exploitation of women & children will continue if you and I do not act.

Naidoo refers to his and others growing concern about TV porn, and his request that the Department of Communications amend the broadcasting licensing criteria to prohibit all forms of pornographic content on national television. Naidoo mentioned that ICASA had already declined Top-TV’s license application for pornographic channels on the basis that it exploited and demeaned women. He mentioned that even COSATU agreed that porn on TV is dangerous for society! He was campaigning for amended legislation stating that without amendments, South African broadcasters would continue to exploit and manipulate the lack of regulation to sexually exploit men, women and children for profit.

Emails from several child activists were intentionally sent to the public to solicit response and further advocacy. Errol Naidoo appealed to the Christian public to write to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) and implore them to rule against porn SMS ads on E-TV from the perspective of preserving the dignity of women and for the safety of vulnerable children. He was particularly concerned about the pornography sms adverts flighted on E-TV on 30 April 2012 and the fact that there were featured graphic images of hard-core pornography.

Just as Errol Naidoo has addressed the media and the moral attack on society, so has Melanie Philips in her article 'Every week I am praying with someone hooked on porn', published in the Daily Mail UK (23 April 2012). I quote:

So Minister, when did porn users' civil liberties trump the protection of children? ... As any responsible parent knows, the internet has introduced a vile new hazard into the upbringing of children. It is inordinately difficult to keep an eye on just what they are accessing on the net through the PC in a corner of their bedroom or the iPhone in their pocket. And lurking but a few clicks of the mouse away are images and videos of hard-core internet pornography.

In a cross-party report published last week, MPs warned that a whole generation of children was growing up with their minds affected by images of depravity from which most adults would avert their gaze.

We're not talking here about mere smut, but the most degraded and perverted sexual acts that warped minds can devise.

Melanie stated in a personal email to me that she quoted statistics from local newspapers, for example, the Daily Mail. She spoke about being horrified at the vast numbers of children accessing this material: at least 90 per cent of 16-year-olds and 33 per cent of ten-year olds regularly view pornography online (2012).

I agree with her sentiment (2012) that 'wholesale corruption of childhood has suddenly overtaken us-and with what untold consequences'. She pointed out that

the response of the companies making this filth available online had been 'astonishingly irresponsible and even contemptuous'.

She spoke about the fact that the four biggest internet providers would again give new customers the chance to block obscene material from their computers when they sign up (2012), but that only one of them, TalkTalk, would offer new customers controls to block pornography from all internet devices. This, she said, included games' consoles and laptops. The other three-Sky, BT and Virgin Media-simply refuse to apply blocking filters as a default setting for all devices.

Why do I include British media statistics in a chapter on children in crisis in South Africa? It is because I believe that South Africa could be in danger of loosening the pornography controls even more.

As far as 'loopholes' are concerned, namely the lip service given to regulatory controls, here is an example which should serve as a warning to us in South Africa. Melanie Philips (2012) states that companies are only talking about new customers rather than existing ones, and none is prepared to take 'the simple and logical step of demanding that those who want pornography should opt *in*, rather than the rest of us opting *out*'.

Philips (2012) refutes the claim made by the industry, in a cross-party report, that an automatic block on internet pornography is unworkable, saying that it is in fact workable, and what they actually mean is that it would hit their profit from the trade. She continues

The firms' professional body, the Internet Service Providers' Association, even had the gall to bleat about the threat to freedom of speech if pornography was filtered out as a default setting. Freedom to corrupt and deprave, more like. In any civilised society, freedom comes with responsibility. By refusing properly to police provision of this vile material, these companies are in effect making themselves complicit in child sexual abuse. Through this cynical stand, Sky, Virgin Media and BT should be regarded as nothing less than online pornographers.

Philips (2012) reminds us that adults would still be able to access this pornography by 'opting in' and that providers are claiming that parental controls are more effective than any technical measures. She argues that more than 60 per cent of 11 to 16-year-olds have internet access in their own rooms, as do no fewer than 41 per cent of seven to ten-year-olds. In addition, many children have other portable devices, so parents cannot safeguard what their children are accessing, and are probably have no idea of the 'filth' they can access.

Philips (2012) emphasizes that the government should at least add protection measures to stop children from watching online pornography, noting that the use of protective filters in homes had actually fallen from 49 to 39 per cent in the past three years. In their report mid-April 2012, MPs had concluded that parents often felt outsmarted by their web-surfing children and lacked the ability to download content filters. I quote,

Pornography warps and brutalises adult minds. The damage that it can do to immature and still-developing children scarcely bears thinking about. At the very least, such images will foster a distorted and degraded view of sexuality and human nature. Indeed, there are fears that the current unlimited access to it is leaving teenagers unable to foster and maintain normal relationships. Child abuse experts have further warned that children can be desensitised by such sexually explicit images, which leaves them vulnerable in turn to sexual abusers who may arrange to meet them in person.

To add to such concerns, children are finding it hard to *stop* accessing such material when they want to. The inquiry cited figures showing that more than a quarter of young patients being treated at a leading private health clinic were receiving help for their addiction to online porn.

It is a sad fact that our society has become steadily ever more sexualised, brutalised and degraded.

Is this not a fitting summary of what is happening in South Africa?

## 14. Conclusion

I have surveyed the plight of children in South Africa, especially in terms of abuse and neglect, and even abandonment. The fact that poverty opens more opportunity for neglect and abuse is evident, but I agree with Brewster about poverty having a spiritual base, because social welfare does not seem to change the attitudes of people dependent on welfare for survival (cf. Chapter 2 of this thesis). A new mindset is needed... a new sense of value and ability to make a difference in life without depending on handouts. The wealthy can also be in spiritual bondage and in need of a new mindset.

I have attempted to consider research and discuss the issues which cause crisis for children in South Africa. This research included UNICEF statistics, particularly of child rights, effects of HIV, legal and welfare structures' support for children, and particularly those suffering from abuse and neglect. Government interventions for abused women and children, and particularly Thuthuzela Care Centres, were investigated. The ramifications of alcohol abuse, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, and the government's efforts to address these problems, were tabled. A study on child abuse was undertaken, with emphasis on domestic abuse – parent-child and sibling abuse. The subject of bullying at schools and sexual, physical and emotional abuse – from family and societal perspective, to government efforts to address abuse were reported and discussed.

Child abuse through technology and media, particularly, was discussed. The efforts of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster were discussed. The African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child regarding specific issues in South Africa, juvenile justice in South Africa and lack of 'ubuntu' were also investigated.

I engaged in depth with the research conducted by Lucy Holborn and Gail Eddy for the Department of Race Relations on the Fractured Family in South Africa, First Steps to Healing. Finally, I closed the chapter with emails indicating the comments of strategic authorities who monitor and promote the well-being of children.

All of the research has led to certain conclusions – priority issues to address in terms of imperatives for the church to minister to children as God would have us do. The

inherent selfishness of man and lack of consideration, especially for children, has made the imperative of being child-centred, and especially with a holistic perspective, a priority. The well-being of children was a priority of Jesus—therefore should it not be so for the church?

The tolerance of the diversity of individual, and often humanistic beliefs, relative values attributed to ‘truth’, and the removal of biblically-based teaching from our public schools, and other related issues, have made it necessary to intentionally teach and train parents and children, from a biblical worldview.

Finally, many children outside of the walls of the church are hurting, but the church is inclined to be introspective—caring for the children who come to Sunday School and not extending to either holistic care of those children or their peers, many of whom have not heard the Good News of the gospel or have been offered help in their times of crisis. The church needs to follow the Great Commission to children as well as to adults—and especially to children.

The following imperatives, which I believe God would wish His church to take to heart and put into action, cannot be successfully followed without His help working through His people by the Holy Spirit—the ultimate healer.

I will address the following imperatives for the church in the following chapter:

1. The church must restore children to their proper biblical importance.
2. Parents must understand the Father-heart of God as related to godly parenting and give intentional biblical teaching and extend their spiritual nurture beyond their own biological children to children of the community.
3. Beyond teaching the usual biblical values by the church, extra teaching on areas of crisis should be addressed—especially on subjects like sexual purity. Parents, child-care workers and children would do well to receive this teaching.
4. The church must respond strategically to children in crisis in South Africa: this includes the need to supply practical help to hurting children in the

community (those neglected and the abused and orphans) and their carers. This would involve offering counselling help and practical help to those suffering from the affects of scourges such as alcohol abuse – one of the root causes of abuse and neglect.

I have noted that the Bible shows us many principles regarding the nurture of children, but neglect and abuse were not serious issues in Bible times because of the strong father and mother figures and extended family care. Today, in South Africa, the prevalence of dysfunctional nuclear families has led to much neglect of children. Because of all the neglect, the children often follow their own pursuits without control or guidance, and much of this is negative, causing them to fall prey to evil – spurred on by negative media, peers, youth and adults with evil intentions – some being abusive in nature. Thus, the father and mother figures and the importance of restoring the family are priority.

Finally, the tolerance of individual, and often humanistic beliefs, relative values attributed to ‘truth’, and the removal of biblically-based teaching from our public schools, and other related issues, have made it necessary for intentional teaching and training with a biblical worldview, for children and their parents.

## **Chapter 4. The biblical and theological imperatives for the church concerning children, with respect to neglect and abuse**

How should the church respond to the plight of children in crisis in South Africa? God would want His hurting children to be comforted. He uses His agent, the church, to do that, as well as godly parents, if the children have been hurt outside of the family context. What would God have us do?

Children should be considered in the light of the imperatives as outlined in this chapter—both the child in a loving, caring godly and safe environment, as well as the hurting child who is impoverished, in every sense, emotionally, physically and spiritually; in short, the neglected and the abused child.

We need to care about every child as Jesus would do. ‘Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me’, Jesus said (Matthew 18:5). We need to care about the child we know—the child within the family, the child within the church context and the child we may not know—the child’s peers, and the children who are in the communities, especially those who are neglected and abused. There is place in each case for the loving nurture of the healing community of the body of Christ to minister Christ’s love to children. The ultimate goal of this ministry is to see them coming to know and love Christ as Saviour and Lord, and in turn to become godly mature adults and nurturers for the next generation: Psalm 78:4–8 reads

...tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

In my view, the church must fulfil four imperatives concerning children with respect to neglect and abuse:

## **1. The church must restore children to the priority position the Bible gives them.**

### **1.1 Self-centred adults**

The Bible contains many references to the importance of children. Jesus also teaches His disciples to respect and welcome children in their midst. On one occasion, Jesus rebuked the disciples for preventing the children from reaching Him. The church needs to restore children to their rightful place in the light of these biblical emphases. We need to continually review our attitude to children and to see the value God puts on children, as well as the severity of His judgement on those who cause children to 'stumble' and to suffer neglect. Mark 10:13–16 states,

And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

In terms of showing how self-centred adults are, even in wanting to have priority in ministry, Matthew 18:1–5 gives us Jesus' perspective:

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me."

Concerning Matthew 18:1 Blomberg (1992:272) comments that the time was immediate and that the question the disciples asked fits in well with frequent Jewish

discussions about hierarchy in various walks of life. The disciples' question recalls Jesus' teaching in 5:19 and 11:11 where the present aspect of the kingdom is considered, and especially on the relationships within the community of followers Jesus is establishing, particularly because He has already seemingly indicated that one of the Twelve, Peter, would somehow be greater than the rest (16:17–19). The present tense "is" thus emphasises the disciples' concern about status and privilege in the community rather than any debate about future reward in heaven. Collins (1944:423–434) cites Ridderbos (1998:332) as stating that he believes that the disciples are referring to the future, but that Jesus is referring to the present. Blomberg (1992:272) states that Matthew 18:1 may link with 17:24–27 where Jesus has raised the question about the behaviour of kings in 17:25, which may have set the disciples thinking about their kingdom again. Jesus' singling out of Peter, James, and John to accompany Him for the transfiguration (17:1–13) he says, would also have raised questions in the disciples' minds about the varying degrees of privilege. Nevertheless, their question seems highly inappropriate in light of Jesus' recent and repeated predictions of His death and resurrection and His teaching on self-denial.

In reviewing Matthew 18:2-4, Blomberg (1992:272–273) refers to the object lesson, (almost an enacted parable) which Jesus gave. Matthew does not say exactly where the disciples were, but apparently there were others nearby, including at least one child. Jesus solemnly declares the disciples must turn away ('change'; from Greek *strephō*) citing Dupont (1969:50–60) from their preoccupation with status and that they must humble themselves like children. This humility refers to an objective state (children depend almost completely on adults for their protection and provision)—a subjective attitude would show children acting humbly which is rare. Blomberg (1992:272-276) states that in first-century thought children were often very little esteemed. Jesus ascribes to them great value, but here He is specifically saying that His disciples must share their condition of utter dependence on God. He points to the fact that no-one can enter the kingdom of heaven without a recognition of one's fundamental inability to save oneself and without a subsequent complete reliance on God's mercy. Blomberg (272-273) cites M'Neile (1915:260) stating that conversely, the greatest in the kingdom (again the 'is' refers to the present aspect of the

kingdom) is for those who acknowledge their helplessness and who respond to God accordingly.

Blomberg (1992:273) notes that Jesus' criterion for greatness is also His criterion for entrance into the kingdom. There is therefore no indication that Jesus is establishing a true hierarchy even in the kingdom's present form. The disciples' concern "who is greatest in the kingdom", was really asking which one of them was greatest. Jesus replied, "Unless you change, ... you will never enter the kingdom." Blomberg comments

All who are confident in their own kingdom standing should take stock. Is our confidence that of a child trusting the goodness of our Father, or is our confidence in ourselves? (273).

He states that Matthew 18:5 implies that the disciples must not merely humble themselves, they must also welcome all others who humble themselves as believers. In light of the wording of verse 4 ("whoever humbles himself like this child") the "little child" of verse 5 most naturally refers to any true disciple. Bruner (2004:209) comments, "Matthew 18:1-4 calls us to humility, then verse 5 gives us a major way to practice humility." Blomberg (1992:273) extends his hermeneutic to state that the welcome is in Christ's name. He refers to Matthew 10:40-42, where he states that Jesus has in mind people who welcome disciples because they accept their message and thus become disciples themselves.

In implication for current life I see the self-centredness of people today, which is revealed by the disciples' self-centredness and the elevation of the importance of the adult. This is just as it is with many within the church today; budgets are generally adult-orientated and often only lip-service accolades are given to children. Jesus exposed their selfishness. Jesus' statement that whoever receives such a child actually welcomes Him personally is a profound statement—a life-changing call from Jesus Himself for mankind to appreciate children as they are extremely precious in His sight.

## 1.2 Rank and pride

Zuck (1996:205) responds to the disciples' question about rank by pointing out that people with self-focused and high ambitions, are not included in God's kingdom. They needed to change their mindset to that of a child—one that was not clouded by a selfish agenda. The disciples needed to lay aside their ambitious views and pride, and be willing to occupy their proper station—a lowly one. Mark 9:35 describes the incident where Jesus, before He placed the little child in the midst of them, told His disciples that “if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all and servant of all”. To consider ourselves as God sees us is humility, and that opinion is not degrading. Pride, or an attempt to be thought of more importantly than we are, is ‘foolish, wicked, and degrading’. Zuck (206) states that that becoming like a little child is recognising one's low estate and acknowledging one's helplessness and actual state of dependence.

These comments from Zuck show the seriousness of the pride of man as an obstacle to him coming to know and love the Lord and to depend on Him. God shows his hate of man's pride and arrogance concerning Jacob in the Book of Amos: ‘The Lord has sworn by himself, declares the Lord, the God of hosts: “I abhor the pride of Jacob and hate his strongholds, and I will deliver up the city and all that is in it” (Amos 6:8). Wolff (1977:282) states that Amos was at home in the tradition of wisdom literature where the ‘abhorrence/abomination of Yahweh’ (יהוה תועבת) is mentioned quite frequently (twelve times in Proverbs) including the specific reference to his abhorrence of arrogance (Proverbs 16:5) and pride (Proverbs 6:16–17). He states that, ‘to hate’ [שנא] parallels “abhorrence/abomination” [תועבה]). Yahweh's abhorrence in Amos is the ‘pride’ of Jacob. ‘Pride’ (גאון) is cited in proverbial wisdom as something which Yahweh ‘hates’ (Proverbs 8:13) and as being the way to destruction (Proverbs 16:18). One can therefore understand Jesus' displeasure at the adults' self-focus and pride as demonstrated in Matthew 18 as it really difficult to have a humble, gentle and appreciative attitude towards children from this stance.

Stafford (2007:209) comments on the selfishness of the disciples when the Pharisees came to test Jesus concerning His views on divorce. But mothers in the crowd brought their children to Him ‘that he might lay his hands on them and pray’

(Matthew 19:13). The disciples, tried to prevent the interruption, just as they had done in the incident in Matthew 18. Stafford imagines their thoughts: 'There He goes again with kids! Doesn't He realise the power and prestige of the men around Him? This is a moment of high influence?' Padilla De Borst (2011:174) also suggests what the disciples' thoughts might have been:

"Oh, all right...Here we go again with an act of compassion, it's good for public relations. Maybe he's doing it to gain favour with the Pharisees he has just antagonized. Or to recruit more followers for his cause. Let's be patient and help him get over it quickly." But Jesus is not done. This is not mere charity or a good photo op for donors. With this encounter, the disciple—and the witnesses of that day and of ours—are in for a lesson far more challenging to prevailing expectations and established categories.

'Let the little children come to me for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these' (Matthew 19:14). The attitude Jesus was addressing seems so typical of adults today. Is it not the norm to consider things from our adult perspective before that of children, even very close children like our own? If this is the predisposition, even of the adults in the family (and even a Christian family) is it not even worse in the church? Keith White (2009:145) states,

We have gone about theology in the wrong way. It has been an adult-orientated pursuit. There is tremendous emphasis given to philosophy, doctrine, systematic theology, hermeneutics, and very little to stories, paradoxes and signs of the kingdom. We have made mistakes in the church. We have got our priorities mixed up. Sometimes we did not distinguish between kingdom and church. Often we underestimated the place and contribution of children and little ones. We honestly did not think we had anything to learn from them! We have contributed to societies where adults, power, wealth, possessions seem to count for almost everything. Where Jesus' teaching to sell everything becomes for many impossible to contemplate. And where childlikeness is

marred, or squeezed into adulthood by our commercialism and adult programmes of education.

### **1.3 The nature of a child**

In Matthew 18:4 we are reminded of the sweet trusting uncomplicated nature of a child and the often proud, suspicious and manipulating attitudes of adults, but Jesus said, 'Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.' Zuck (1996:206) makes some insightful comments, arguing that Matthew 18:4 refers to the child whom Jesus called to stand beside Him: 'Entry comes to those who are lowly and helpless; status comes to those who have a humble spirit like children'.

White (2009:153) challenges us, as the body of believers making up the church, as Spirit-filled agents of mission, to come alongside children at risk. He states, 'He promises that as we open our hearts to one child, we welcome Christ himself.' He warns though that in coming alongside children at risk there will be costs involved. In the process,

we need to reshape the processes, nature and structures of the church, mission and society. If we fail, it is not just children who continue to suffer but civilization as God sees it. Not only will children fail to have their rightful place but Jesus himself will be misunderstood and unrecognised. He will have knocked at the door of our souls and fellowships in vain. But when we welcome a child in his name, we have opened our hearts afresh to him.

These are profound statements implying that we, as adults, need to repent of our selfish ways and love and welcome children, as Jesus did. As a result we are welcoming His intimate involvement in our lives and ministry.

John Collier (2009:206–207), editor of *Toddling to the Kingdom* (in making comments on the theological conference held in Penang in 2006) noted that both structural and administrative changes would need to be implemented within a church for children to be intentionally welcomed and that these would include a rediscovery

of the biblical principles of church in the Bible. Changes include removal of obstacles such as segregation of children and adults, which happens in certain cultures. They include professionalism and trying to mould children into that model which needs to 'loosen up' so children can have extra time to do things and to be more spontaneous. In commenting on the repetitive nature of many children's stories, however, he mentions that children appreciate knowing what is planned ahead and there is some value in liturgy, thus novelty is not always necessary. Churches need to be shown how God can work through children, because people do not realise their capabilities. Other considerations for making a church more child-friendly could include the preaching having more variety, shorter sermons and the worship including children in more relevant ways, for example, using more art, colour, drama and dance. The conclusion is as that if child-orientated changes were made, adults would become more caring and nurturing as they realise that children are vulnerable. There would also be more emphasis on relationships.

#### **1.4 Adults as stumbling blocks to children**

In Matthew 18:6–10 Jesus emphasises the seriousness of leading children astray:

but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire. See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.

Blomberg (1992:274) refers to the negative illustration from Matthew 18:5–9 as: Causing Sin Risks Damnation (18:6–9). He cites Newman and Stine (1988:578) who state that verse 6 continues Jesus' teaching about 'these little ones' and is therefore

transitional, nevertheless the shift to the discussion of those who cause sin creates a stronger thematic link with verses 7–9 than with verses 1–5. Blomberg refers to Matthew's favourite skandal-word group introducing verse 6 and links it back with 17:27 ('offend,' skandalisōmen). He suggests that the sense is to 'cause to sin', in causing to apostatize rather than in causing offense. 'Who believe in me' demonstrates that the 'little ones' still refer to the disciples, though perhaps focusing particularly on those who are deemed insignificant. He states that one who might otherwise cause such a little one to sin ought to long for a decisive dramatic, physical death rather than risk eternal judgment. The 'large millstone' (literally, millstone for a donkey) referred to the huge stone wheels which were attached to a horizontal bar which connected to a donkey's harness. As the animal walked around in circles, the wheel rolled over a raised stone slab (similar to a large birdbath) crushing the grain underneath. The word Pelagei ('depths') refers to the deepest part of the sea. Jesus' vivid metaphor leaves no doubt over the certainty of drowning. His logic proceeds as in 5:21–22—not implying that one evil act leads to damnation, but that a life-style which causes others to sin is incompatible with true discipleship.

According to Blomberg (1992:272-276) Matthew 18:7 shows the worlds' hold, yet also affirms the accountability of all offenders, as is evidenced in Romans 5:12. Since the fall all inherit a sinful nature, which makes sin inevitable in their lives, but all people have the choice to go along with that nature. He states that God, in Christ, offers a way out of this otherwise hopeless situation, so that those who reject Jesus have only themselves to blame and that they then cannot escape everlasting punishment. He suggests that 'The man' of verse 7b is generic, but that Matthew's original audience must have thought of Judas in particular, especially after seeing very similar remarks of 26:24. The reference to 'the world' in verse 7a, he points out, shows that temptations to sin come from inside the community of professing believers as well as outside.

Blomberg (1992:275) cites Green (1989:172) who describes from Matthew 18:8–9 (and 5:29-30—'mirror-image' logic) that Jesus now applies the same principle of taking drastic action to those who would cause themselves to sin. There Jesus applied these hyperboles to the subject of lust, applying them to any kind of sin. Blomberg (275) comments that Jesus reminds the disciples to totally reject anything

that will lead them into evil and he points to the stark contrast between those who recognise their complete dependence on God, therefore welcoming other believers in humility and service, and those, including professing believers, who lead themselves and others into sin. He points out that these verses remind us of the lack of love shown to Christians and that divisions and conflict too often characterise Christian relationships, and one has to ask if some of these people may well not be Jesus' disciples at all and thus remain under threat of damnation. He states that conversely, oppressed and marginalised Christians should be encouraged here by the fact that faithful dependence on God, regardless of the treatment received by others, makes a person great in God's eyes.

Matthew 18:10 says, 'See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.' Blomberg (1992:275) cites Davies (1964:226-228) who defines 'Look down on' as despising. 'These little ones' repeats the expression of verse 6 where Jesus provides the rationale for the commands of verses 1–9, which is to humble ourselves and never cause others to sin as God never despises His people but is always willing to go to great lengths to preserve them (cf. 1QH 5:20-22). He describes verse 10b as somewhat cryptic, questioning whether it implies the idea of guardian angels—that each person has an angel watching out for and representing him or her before God. He refers to similar Jewish beliefs which were common (e.g., b. Sabb. 119b, from a tractate of the Talmud—a significant collection of the Jewish oral tradition interpreting the Torah) having developed out of Psalm 91:11. He refers to others which imply a more collective concept, as with the angels who watch over nations in Daniel 10:10–14 or over churches as in one interpretation of Revelation 2:1–3:22. He refers to Qumran which seems to combine an individual and collective role for angels in the worshiping community (1QSa 2:9–10). Blomberg also suggests that the reference to seeing God's face seems to imply access to God (cf. similar expressions in 2 Samuel 14:24 and 1 Kings 10:8). In a more definite statement he refers to Hebrews 1:14 teaching that angels are concerned for believers and serve them. Thus Jesus' words in Matthew 18:10 are appropriate even if we cannot be sure of all the specific ways in which angels minister to us.

Zuck (1996:211) does not argue about specific or general guardian angels, but draws attention to the special angelic beings having a special relationship to children, carrying out a specific ministry on their behalf (constantly beholding the face of the Father). He questions how adults can then look down on believing children. He goes on to give the example of the shepherd leaving the ninety-nine in order to find the lost sheep (Matthew 18:11–13) prizing even one lost sheep, and that the reference to causing even one of these little ones to stumble, is a very serious issue (:9) ‘And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.’

Hagner (1998:517-527) gives an explanation of this passage after his major structural analysis stating that he believes that the passage points to the significance of considering of fundamental importance how one treats disciples of Jesus—that is, how one treats fellow members of the church. So important are fellow believers that to receive them is to receive Jesus Himself. He does not refer to ‘these little ones’ as children. To me this shows an adult perspective. He refers to Paul, building on the tradition of the teaching of Jesus, insisting on the importance of not causing one’s brother or sister to stumble (Romans 14:13, 21; 1 Corinthians 8:9,13); and he knows that action must be taken so that one does not stumble oneself. Thus he exhorts the Christian to put to death the members of his or her old nature (cf. Romans 6:12-13; Colossians 3:5).

The fact that Jesus places the lost sheep parable within the discourse about children in Matthew’s gospel, shows His heart for children—the one little one of the ninety-nine needs to be found and saved (In Luke’s Gospel, after Luke 15:3–7, the parable precedes those of the lost coin and prodigal son indicating the importance of salvation—even for children).

What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray (Matthew 18:12–13).

How important it is, an imperative for the church, that we overtly seek to minister to children who are in situations where they are being led astray (sins of omission would include not just noticing children—not actually finding out about their situation when we can see tendencies of evil influence, or where we do not make any effort to actively intervene in a situation where children are at risk).

### **1.5 Receiving children**

Each child is important and “needs to be received” according to Wilmer (2009:31) cited by White. He states,

It is in the nature of a child to be received. Adults might survive on a desert island but an abandoned and exposed child will not survive. They must be received to continue in existence. So reception is a central and fundamental theme in theology, in our understanding of God in Christ and our relating to him.

White puts this into practice when he works with the children who come to Millgrove House in England. At the South African 4–14 Conference held in Johannesburg in March 2011, he shared about the importance of showing a child that he is significant. He therefore gives undivided attention to any child he is with, and usually has his head on the same level, even if it means that he needs to sit on the floor to do so. During that conference I noticed that he would give undivided attention to each person to whom he was speaking—making each feel special!

Throughout Jesus’ earthly life we witness Him ministering to children in the midst of the crowd. In Mark 10:16 Jesus blesses the children. He welcomes them to take part in His teachings. In John 6:1–15 Jesus uses the boy’s loaves and fishes to perform a miracle and later He condones the children’s praises after healing the blind and lame at the temple (Matthew 21:14–16). It is in at the church gatherings that a child is exposed to church traditions, symbols, songs, public worship, public prayer meetings, teaching from the Word and the importance of the gathering together of believers (Hebrews 10:25). It is here they can develop relationships and experience God’s love in action outside the home. It is here they witness how a relationship with

God through Jesus Christ can make a difference. These are things that cannot be taught in a classroom or experienced outside the congregation of believers.

Children learn by witnessing how adults faithfully handle difficult life situations, because actions speak so much louder than words; credibility in a godly life-style is extremely important in a world of instability and a lack of absolute truth and biblical worldviews, both of which are so foundational. In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul encourages us to follow his example as He follows Christ, and we are to be that same example to children. Paul also challenges Titus in Titus 2:1–15 to teach sound doctrine through a healthy Christian life-style, rather than doctrinal exposition alone.

Zuck (1996:12) refers to a number of examples of children showing Jesus' deep interest in them as well as His concern for their well-being. He brought a boy, the son of a widow in Nain (Luke 7:11–17) and a girl, Jairus' daughter aged twelve (Matthew 9:18–26) back from death to life. He also healed physically (the official's son in John 4:43–53) and spiritually (a demon-possessed boy in Matthew 17:14–21). Zuck states

Clearly Jesus did not neglect or despise children. He loved them, enjoyed being with them, ministered to them, and even used them to teach spiritual lessons to adults. Parents, teachers, church leaders, and others who fail to focus adequately on children, stand in opposition to Jesus' valuation of the young. On the other hand, those who give attention to children and their needs, are following the example set by Jesus himself (Matthew 7:12–13).

## **1.6 Nurture of children**

The norm during Bible times was very much one of parental involvement in the raising of their children. It was usual for both father and mother and extended family to be together at home in this important function, though spiritual nurture was more of the women's role in the home itself. Today, parents are not caring for their children as personally and intensely as at that time. It is not conducive for the best nurturing of children to have after-care centres and for nannies to bring up our children more than the parents in some cases. Much worse is the lack of boundaries when it comes to the media's influence on our children. It is critically important for parents to

intentionally intervene to prevent corrupting influences like age-restricted movies and the pornographic material children can access through cell-phones and the internet from harming them emotionally and spiritually.

The Book of Proverbs gives excellent instruction for parents and children. Proverbs 4:14–19 warns,

Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil. Avoid it; do not go on it; turn away from it and pass on.

For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong; they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble. For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day. The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.

Murphy (1998:27–28) states that this exhortation begins and ends on the note of life (verses 10 and 13). He suggests that verses 14–15, referring to the ‘way of wisdom’, cannot be described without warning against the ‘path of the wicked’. He points to the intensity of expression mentioned as being poured into the prohibitions against walking down the path of the wicked. In verses 16–17 he states that the path of evil is their continual preoccupation (cf. also 2:12–15) as indicated by the striking phrases ‘cannot sleep,’ ‘bread of wickedness’ (referring to the livelihood that they secure by their sinful profits) and ‘the wine of violence’ (4:17). He refers to graphic descriptions in 1:10–19, especially verses 15, 19, 18–19, and states that the symbols of light and darkness that accompany the journey in these ‘ways’ he believes to be fitting conclusions. The way of wisdom is a path ever shining, as opposed to the darkness that drenches the road of the stumbling wicked. ‘Stumble’ serves as a good focus word for this section (verses 12, 16 and 19).

Garrett (1993:Vol.14:88) refers to these verses (Proverbs 4:10–19) as having the normal structure of a paternal exhortation: an opening appeal to listen (verses 10–13) followed by an exhortation in a specific area (verses 14–19). He states that in this case the exhortation warns the reader to avoid one of the two tempters, the

criminal. He alludes to the relative length of the appeal to listen, implying that the family bond is a major concern of this text. He points to the fact that if the young man should go wrong, he not only hurts himself but also his parents.

The doctrine of the two ways dominates this section; the language of taking a journey appears throughout. The father guides the son in the first appeal preceding verses 14–19, in ‘the way of wisdom’ and ‘along straight paths’. The boy’s ‘steps will not be hampered’ and he ‘will not stumble’ when he walks and runs. He must not ‘set foot on the path of the wicked’ or ‘walk’ or ‘travel’ in their way. The righteous walk in the safe light of day, but ‘the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble’. Garrett (88) explains that the rendering when considering ‘safely’ would make the meaning to be ‘growing brighter and brighter until the safe light of day’. He states that the depravity of the wicked is described vividly—they live for crime. It is their food and drink and sleep (verses 16–17). They live to commit crimes and do not commit crimes in order to live. He points out that their punishment will be appropriate. Their greatest satisfaction is in making others fall, but they too shall fall and not know how or why. Here, Garrett (88) explains that in verse 16 ‘they make someone stumble’, and in verse 19 ‘they stumble over themselves’.

Jesus, clearly wants the worst punishment to befall those who make children stumble, and thus, the church must ensure careful selection of Sunday School teachers and mentors for children, accountability in their service—as unto the Lord, and should ensure overt teaching of the right, godly ways of living so that the children can be taught in His ways. Thus, as we consider placing the child in a position of priority in the church, let us overtly place each child in a place where we can ensure godly nurture—teaching the ways of Christ, God’s Word, warn against evil, intervene to remove any wrong influence as far as possible—give the light continually so that darkness of sin is dispelled.

## **2. Parents must understand the Father-heart of God as related to godly parenting and extend their spiritual nurture beyond their own biological children to children of the community**

### **2.1 The Father reflected in His Son, Jesus**

We would come a long way in fathering and mothering children if we understood the Father-heart of God Himself. John 5:19 says, 'So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.'" Therefore, Jesus and His ways of working with people, epitomise God's fathering in many ways. Smail (2006:2) speaks of being made in His likeness, and therefore the need to reflect His nature. It is imperative for the church to teach truth about the Father and to continually remind the people of His greatness—and that they need to fear and reverence Him.

What are the characteristics of the Father which have reflected in His Son, and which should reflect through the fathers and mothers of the church—to their own children and to others?

### **2.2 Characteristics of God the Father**

Utley (2008) discusses characteristics which are a useful guide to those qualities we would like to see reflected in Christian parents. He refers to the fact that the Father will not forsake His child. This is such an important fact to consider within human families where a parent may abandon or forsake the child—dysfunctional families, or where a parent shows conditional love to his/her child depending on his behaviour or effort to please the parent.

The Father will not forsake His children. The Psalmist pleads 'Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation! For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in' (Psalm 27:9–10). The Father's love is the reason for Him sending His Son to redeem the world (John 3:16) and Psalm

103 refers to all His loving benefits for us to consider. I will only mention those qualities reflected in verses 3–14:

- The One who can forgive all our iniquity and heal all our diseases (:3).
- The One who redeems our life from the pit, and shows us steadfast love and mercy (:4).
- He satisfies you with good so that our youth is renewed like the eagle's (:5).
- He works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed (:6).
- He makes known his ways (:7).
- He is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (:8).
- He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever (:9).
- He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities (:10).
- He shows compassion to those who fear him (:13).
- He remembers that we are dust (:14).

As parents, we should apply all of these characteristics with the sensitivity God will help us to show, as we turn to Him for help. God promises us, 'If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!' (Matthew 7:11).

Utley (2008) mentions other attributes which I see evidenced in Psalm 103 (friend, guide, healer/ forgiver, mercy-giver, trainer and being considered special). He also refers to qualities evidenced in mothers, specifically the love of a nursing mother, 'Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you' (Isaiah 49:15). He refers to Jesus, the Son, as portrayed in the Gospels and revealed as the "only begotten Son" (John 1:18; 3:16,18; I John 4:9). He is revealed as the "Son of God" (Matthew. 4:3; 14:33; 16:16; Luke 1:32,35; John 1:34,49; 6:69; 11:27) and as the Beloved Son (Matthew. 3:17; 17:5). Jesus uses the term 'Abba' for God (Mark 14:36) and His use of pronouns shows both His and our relationship to God,

- a. 'My Father', for example, John 5:18; 10:30,33; 19:7; 20:17.

b. “your Father”, for example, Matthew. 17:24-27.

c. “our Father”, for example, Matthew. 6:9,14,26.

God is our Creator. ‘Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them’ (Genesis 1:26–27). Let us then teach our children that they are made in God’s image and that He has entrusted us to care for His creation as good stewards. We are also reminded that God created human beings and thus we should care for other human beings as part of His creation: ‘Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?’ (Malachi 2:10).

The Father would want us to show respect and care for others who deserve dignity. For this reason, human rights which oppose God’s respect for life, as is the case in South Africa with abortion or the possible legalisation of prostitution, are directly opposed to caring for His creation.

The apostle Paul reminds his listeners that God is there to empower us in life: ‘for “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, for we are indeed his offspring”’ (Acts 17:28).

The implications of God, the Creator, giving us the mandate to care for His creation, allow us to be creative and to make decisions to benefit creation. We ourselves have life. God has also given us creativity, so let us encourage our children to be creative with the talents and intelligence He has given them.

## **2.3 The spiritual mandate for parents**

### **2.3.1 We need to love our children**

Imperatives for women, when training other women, found in Titus 2:3–5, include teaching them to love their husbands and children, to be kind, pure, submissive and to show hospitality. When do we tell our spouses and children that we love them, when do we affirm them, when do we give quality time to them? God’s Word is full of

the message of His love for us and this love should constrain us to love others (2 Corinthians 5:14)—and not only in word, but in deed and in truth (1 John 3:18). Zuck (1996:113) notes that parental love, in a small way, depicts God’s love for His spiritual children (Deuteronomy 23:5) and those who believe in Christ become sons whom He loves (1 John 3:1). As Christians, we should extend Christ’s love to hurting children, not just giving cursory comments of care on a Sunday, but also following up during the week.

An inexplicable fact is that some parents today do not seem to enjoy their children—abandoning them, not providing for them. Even the wealthy sometimes give material goods instead of love, leaving children feeling empty. As Brewster (2010:4) so clearly spelled it out when addressing the issue, many children and young people today have everything to live with, but nothing to live for’. This statement is profound enough to have been included in the Cape Town Commitment emanating from Lausanne III. In contrast, Job 29:5 refers to Job having his children around him. Children sometimes even slept in the same bed as their parents. Luke 11:7 says, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed.’

Strauss (1975: Chapter 3) makes a statement which has been quoted by a number of people:

Here we are, faced with the awesome responsibility of moulding our children into spiritually dynamic, well-adjusted adults that will bring joy to God’s heart and to ours. Children need to be loved by their parents. That’s the way God deals with us. “For the Father himself loves you dearly” (1 John 16:27, TLB). “See how very much our heavenly Father loves us ...” (1 John 3:1, TLB). And that’s the way he wants us to deal with our children. It represents what may be our children’s greatest need, and the one which parents can fulfil better than anyone else.

Strauss (1975: Chapter 3) reminds us that there are many biblical exhortations to love. For example, ‘Dear friends, let us practise loving each other, for love comes from God and those who are loving and kind show that they are the children of God... .’ (1 John 4:7, TLB). He points out that this verse would include the love of

parent for child. Specific references include Titus 2:4, the overt teaching of older women to train younger women to love their children, and for fathers, 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him' (Psalm 103:13, KJV). That word rendered 'pitieth' is twice translated 'love' in the King James Version (Psalm 18:1; Daniel 1:9). This Scripture implies the deepest sort of parental love, tenderness, mercy, and compassion (the word used in the ESV); and it is here referenced in terms of fathers. Both mothers and fathers are to love their children.

### **2.3.2 We need to comfort our children**

Utley (2008) refers to the analogy of the Father as a loving parent who carries his son: 'and in the wilderness, where you have seen how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way that you went until you came to this place.' (Deuteronomy 1:31). Here, we are reminded that children need to be protected and comforted—a father has a wonderful calming effect on his children and he needs to show compassion to his child. Here we are reminded of physical comfort—the need to be picked up. This is important. Physical touch, for instance giving a hug, is very important for a father to show to his child. In the case of children who do not experience the comfort of a physical father's hug, the spiritual father figures in the church can fulfil a role.

### **2.3.3 We need to bring up our children in the ways of the Lord**

Deuteronomy 6:5–9 gives parents instructions on how to bring up their children in the ways of the Lord.

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Christensen (2001:143), when referring to the structure of this passage of scripture, states that in verse 5 *וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ*, 'you shall love YHWH your God'— Moran (1963:144–147) states that the command to love belongs to the treaty language of the ancient Near East (he studied the ancient Amarna Letters). Christensen (143) also cites McKay (1972:426-35) as saying that the language of loving God is not drawn directly from treaty terminology as such. His conclusion is that God's actions in the historical events that make up the conquest of the exodus provided the motivation for a covenant relationship between God and His people. *וּבְכָל לִבְבְּךָ בְּכָל נַפְשְׁךָ*, 'with all your heart and with all your being and with all your might.' Christensen (143) suggests that the pairing of *לֵב*, 'heart,' and *נֶפֶשׁ*, 'being, soul-life', makes a distinction between mental and emotional energy and activity. The implication he suggests is that our love for God is to embrace the whole of our conscious and sub-conscious mind, requiring self-discipline in that we are to love God with all our might (*מֵאֵד*) as well. Christensen (143) comments that in verse 6, when reading the phrase *הָאֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים*, 'these words', he recalls the opening words of Deuteronomy (1:1). The commandments are to be 'upon your heart'; that is, the people need to internalise the law. He mentions Jeremiah seeing this need when he spoke of a new covenant in which YHWH declares: 'I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts' (Jeremiah 31:31–33).

In verses 7–9 he points to 'teach them diligently to your children' (verse 7). Instead of the injunctions 'as frontlets between your eyes' and 'on the doorposts of your house' (verses 8–9) necessarily helping in this matter, he says that on the contrary, in some cases this led to specific practices that, at times, caused people to lose sight of the remarkable vision of an internalised covenant suggested in verses 5–7, namely using phylacteries (*טֹטֶפֶת*) and mezuzot (*מְזוּזוֹת*), small containers for parchments containing certain biblical verses (usually Exodus 13:1–10; 11–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21; and sometimes the Decalogue). Christensen (143) states that any traveller to modern Israel should be familiar with the various forms of mezuzot on the doorpost of each hotel room.

Christensen (2001:143) suggests an explanation of Deuteronomy 6:5–9. He refers to the words of the Shema in Deut 6:4, which he states bear witness to the experience of the living presence of God in history and that God created Israel as a people:

'Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one'. He refers to the people of ancient Israel singing the words, 'Who is like you, O YHWH, among the gods?' (Exodus 15:11) and the fact that they knew the response. There were no other gods like YHWH! He states that this would make it fairly simple to go from this practical knowledge to significant theological conclusions. The word  $\tau\eta\kappa$  in the text of the Shema speaks of 'oneness' of God, and this clearly presents the doctrine of monotheism, making this a creedal statement.

Christensen (2001:143) concludes this review by stating that the focus on teaching your children 'these words' diligently within the context of the family and at all conceivable times and in many different places, illustrates the pedagogical purpose of Deuteronomy, as do many other passages in this Book, which was the primary curriculum in an ongoing programme of religious education in ancient Israel. He refers again to phylacteries and mezuzot which he says are essentially pedagogical tools designed to keep the great summary statements of the 'Words of YHWH' central for each individual member of community, which he refers to as the covenant community.

Merrill (1994: Vol. 4:166–169) describes, Deuteronomy 6:6–9 as an exhortation to teach the children. He refers back to Deuteronomy (4:9–10; 6:2) as an important demand of the covenant relationship that it be perpetuated beyond the immediate generation of those with whom the Lord made it, for its promises and provisions were for generations yet unborn (4:25, 40; 5:9–10, 29). He states that in practical terms this necessitated a regular routine of instruction. The father must educate the son and son the grandson so that the fact of the covenant and its features might never be forgotten. Merrill (167) notes that in 6:6 the whole covenant is described as 'these commandments' (literally 'these words'). This term encompasses the entire covenant text as communicated by Moses, encapsulated especially in the Shema of verses 4–5. He states that this is evidenced in the instruction to 'tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads' (verse 8) as well as to 'write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates' (verse 9). He speaks of the children memorising them 'upon your hearts' (verse 6). He refers to the historical context of the Old Testament where psychological understanding of the heart was that it was not the centre of emotional life and response but rather referred to the mind—the

seat of rational thinking and the intellect. He states that to 'be upon the heart' is to be in one's constant, conscious reflection. He cites Wolff (48) as saying that to be upon the heart means that the hearers should always be conscious of what they have learned. He refers to the following Scriptures in this connection: Proverbs 7:3, Jeremiah 17:1 and Daniel 7:28.

Concerning Deuteronomy 6:7 Merrill (1994:167) says that this is so vital that the covenant recipient must impress the words of covenant faith into the thinking of his children by inscribing them there with indelible sharpness and precision (therefore the reference to the piel of *šānan*). Here Merrill acknowledges Mc Kay (1972:426-35) and Crenshaw (1985:JBL 602-603). He speaks about the method of the engraver of a monument hammering and chiselling with painstaking care to etch a text into the face of a solid slab of granite—much labour to ensure that the message remains permanent. This is so that the generations of Israelites to come must receive and transmit the words of the Lord's everlasting covenant revelation. Merrill also alludes to the fact that Moses made this message indelible by constant repetition and reinforcement while sitting at home or walking in the pathway, whether lying down to sleep or rising for the tasks of a new day. Both teacher and pupil must be preoccupied with covenant concerns and their faithful transmission (verse 7).

Merrill (1994:168) points out that the pairing of these sets of contrasting places and postures forms a double merism (the use of opposing terms to express an all-encompassing concept) in that sitting suggests passivity and walking suggests activity, but together compassing all of human effort. Likewise, he states that reference to retiring at night and rising up in the morning speaks of the totality of time. The conclusion here then, is that covenant truth is so important that it must be at the very centre of one's labour and life.

In terms of elaborating on the covenant, Merrill (1994:166–169) states that Moses instructed the people to tie the words of covenant to their hands (or forearms, as *yād* clearly means here—citing Ackroyd: 9TDOT 5:4000 referring to the wrist or arm) and foreheads (verse 8) expressing the centrality of the covenant to everyday life. Merrill cites Geronzi (TRDOT5:319-321) in discussing *.tō.tāpót*, Speiser (1957:208–217) on "T(W)TPT", as does Tigay (1982:321–331), suggesting that the purpose is that

the words might be “for a sign” (*lě’ôf*). That is, they would identify their bearer as a member of the covenant community. When attached to the forehead (thus NIV as opposed to the literal “between the eyes”) the words function as bands wrapped around the head at the level of the forehead (thus suggesting figurative or literal usage of the Hebrew parallelism, but clearly serving as symbols of covenant affiliation).

Merrill (1994:168) refers to post-biblical Judaism and to the present day where verses of the Torah (Exodus 13:1–10; 13:11–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; and Deuteronomy 11:13–21), were placed in a miniature box of four chambers, the whole being known as the *těpillîn* (‘prayers’) or phylactery (cf. Matthew 23:5). A similar box, with only one chamber but containing the same texts was worn on the forearm as a ‘hand phylactery.’ He cites Schiffman (1991:244–245) and Driver (1971:Vol.15:898–903) concerning “Tefillin”. Merrill (168) believes that this binding on arm and forehead was originally intended to be figurative (more precisely, metaphorical) from the context of the instruction, the non-literal meaning (‘upon the heart,’ verse 6; ‘at home,’ ‘along the road,’ verse 7). He also says that it is impractical to wear such objects in everyday life, and that they are worn only on special worship occasions in modern Judaism. Such restriction to special times is not to be found in any of the four passages where the *těpillîn* are discussed.

In referring to verse 9 where the covenant words also were to be written on the doorframes of Israelite houses and on the gateposts of their villages, Merrill (1994:168) cites Schiffman (1991:Vol.11:1474-1477) concerning the word ‘Mezuzah’, that he also believes this should be understood metaphorically, but states that in post-biblical practice observant Jews placed a *mězûzāh* (the same word as that for “doorpost”) a small metal receptacle containing Deuteronomy 6:4–9 and Deuteronomy 11:13–21 in twenty-two lines, at the right of the doorway in obedience to Moses’ instructions here. Merrill (168) states that the form of the commandment is very significant. Once Moses had ordered that the covenant commandments be worn on the person of the faithful Israelite, he expanded the sphere of covenant claim to the house and then the village, thus identifying the person and his entire family and community as the people of the Lord.

My conclusion is that nothing said in this passage was incidental. All the references to specific places, items to be placed on parts of the body or in significant parts of the home, such as the doorposts, and the references to meditate and discuss the things of God at any conceivable time of day or night, were all meant to show the seriousness of the covenant in times past, present and future and that these contextually appropriate reminders of the covenant and the importance of a child committing Scriptures to heart and lifestyle cannot be over-emphasised. With this in mind, parents should bring gospel resources into the home to support the imperative to bring up children in the ways of the Lord, as well as to deploy every possible way for them to follow the Lord more closely.

In pointing out parental hypocrisy, Zuck (1998:105) quotes the cliché, 'Do as I say, not as I do'. He states that our actions can belie what we say: 'Do you want your children to love, obey, trust, and follow the Lord? Then you must do the same. Boys and girls seldom live up to standards they do not see exemplified in their fathers and mothers.' He argues that childless parents and parentless children, two family situations which stand as contemporary problems, were almost unheard of in Bible times. He refers to the fact that in Old Testament and New Testament times for children to be without parents was unusual, and society was expected to help the fatherless.

### **2.3.4 Historical context of parenting and education**

#### **2.3.4.1 Parenting and education**

How was parenting and education evidenced in Bible times? Gower and Wright (1987) describe Jewish education as initially centred on the home. Education of both boys and girls was the mother's responsibility for the first three years (probably until the child was weaned). She taught the girls their domestic duties throughout their childhood. Boys were taught the law by their father from three years of age, and fathers were also responsible for teaching their sons a trade. Jesus was a carpenter's son (Matthew 13:55) and also a carpenter (Mark 6:3). A rabbi once said, 'He who does not teach his son a useful trade is bringing him up to be a thief.' This, Gower and Wright suggest, explains why there were groups of linen workers and potters living in the same place (1 Chronicles 4:21–23). Girls were able to take on

professional jobs—which included things like midwifery (Exodus 1:15–21) and singing (Ecclesiastes 2:8).

Education, according to Gower and Wright (1987) was basically a religious education which enabled children to understand the nature of God through what He had done and what He required in the law. Deuteronomy 6 is a key passage (as previously outlined). Children were prodded to ask questions about festivals (Exodus 12:26; Deuteronomy 6:20–25) by facing them with unusual objects (Exodus 13:14–15; Joshua 4:6). In this way it became natural to teach them about the acts of God.

Over time, as sacred shrines began to be a part of the lives of the Jewish people, Gower and Wright (1987) suggest that the personnel who worked there probably began to provide some kind of formal education. They conject that Samuel was probably being taught by Eli the priest at Shiloh (1 Samuel 1:24) and that he himself set up a school of the prophets at Ramah (1 Samuel 19:18–21) and that some kind of theological schools developed from this (2 Kings 2:5–7; Isaiah 8:16). They note that this is the origin of the practice of calling a priest ‘father’. The priest exercised the role of the father in teaching the children (2 Kings 2:3,12).

When the Jews returned from exile, Ezra, a priest and a scribe (an interpreter of the law) was commissioned by the Persian emperor to teach the Jewish people the law (Ezra 7:12–26). One morning everyone who had returned stood to listen to the law (Nehemiah 8:1–8)—this included the children: ‘So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month’ (Nehemiah 8:2). The teachers then moved among the crowd explaining the Law to them, which resulted in the scribes becoming important teachers of the law in the community. A scribe also wrote letters for people and could be recognised by the inkpot that was attached to his belt (Ezekiel 9:2). They were considered almost in the same light as the earlier prophets and were called ‘men of the great synagogue’.

Gower and Wright (1987) suggest that the synagogue itself came into being during the Exile as people gathered together to learn the Torah and other sacred writings. When the Jews returned from exile they continued the practice of listening to the

Scriptures being read and interpreted (see Luke 4:16–22). The buildings where this reading and instruction occurred also became centres of worship.

The Greek child, Gower and Wright (1987) report, went to school at the age of seven if his parents could afford the fees. He studied basic skills (reading, writing, counting) music (poetry, dance, musical instruments) and physical skills (wrestling, boxing, running, throwing the javelin and discus; described in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27). At sixteen, at the gymnasium he studied literature, philosophy, and politics. Interested adults were invited to the classes for discussion. Some students were tutored by outstanding teachers who had opened their own schools in Athens. Though other cultures, such as the Greeks, influenced the Jews, every effort was made to keep to the teachings as outlined in the Torah. The Seleucid king, over-seeing the Greek school in Jerusalem, was defeated in battle in 164 BC. The Hasidim, or Pharisees as they were beginning to be called, led by Simeon ben Shetah, insisted that from that time all Jewish boys should attend the 'house of the book' for a Jewish education, led by a teacher paid by synagogue funds. Teachers had to be married men known to have good character. A 'house of study' attached to the Jerusalem Temple, offered Higher education. It was here that Jesus was found when twelve years old (Luke 2:41–52).

Gower and Wright (1987) state that Jesus would have gone to a house of the book at Nazareth when He was about six years old, sitting with His peers in a semicircle on the floor, facing the teacher. Much teaching was rote memorisation through repetition, and this led to the common practice of reading aloud (see Acts 8:30). Writing was done in wax on a wooden tablet (Luke 1:63) and sometimes on the ground (John 8:6). Their only textbook was the Taanach (the Law, Prophets, and Writings) and these became the Christian Old Testament (2 Timothy 3:15). From age ten to fifteen traditional law and the Jewish law was taught. The brightest of the boys, for example Paul, could go to Jerusalem to a law school with a highly esteemed teacher (Acts 22:3) and often could attend meetings of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of the Jews. Only after A.D. 65 was school made compulsory for all boys. The high priest Gamala ordered that boys from age six years and above in every town should attend school (before that too many boys had played truant in the

voluntary system). The early Christian community, being economically disadvantaged, was unable to provide schools for its children.

When referring to Psalm 19:9–10, Gower and Wright (1987) describe the New Testament education scenario. When a boy first went to school in New Testament times, he went down to the synagogue soon after dawn to listen to the story of how Moses received the law, after which he was taken to the teacher's house for breakfast. There he received cakes with letters of the law written on them. In school, he received a slate with passages from the Scriptures written on it. The slate was actually smeared with honey and he was required to trace the letters through the honey with his pen. As he proceeded he would lick the nib of the pen and he would receive a graphic picture of his main reason for going to school—to absorb the Scriptures:

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb (Psalm 19:7–10).

As we consider the modern day context how can parents expand on the imperatives listed in Deuteronomy 6:5–9 and in encouraging the appreciation of biblical text such as Psalm 19? I believe that parents should ensure that there are spiritually nurturing resources in the home, such as Bibles and age-appropriate devotionals, and that every opportunity should be made to transport their children to Sunday School and other spiritually nurturing opportunities, like church children's clubs, vacation Bible clubs and children's camps.

#### **2.3.4.2 Parents sharing Bible stories**

The importance of parents sharing Bible stories and pointing to God's revelation of Himself to man, to children and grandchildren is shown clearly in Psalm 78:1–8:

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Hossfeld and Zenger (2005:294–295) describe Psalm 78 as an instructional theological poem. It takes up, by name, the David tradition and links it to the ideology of kingship. Verses 1–2 give a ‘Wisdom–style instructional opening’ with a call to hear and a reference to the content of the discourse to follow. Hossfeld and Zenger (294–295) reference close parallel Scriptures namely Psalm 49:2–5 and the calls in late Wisdom material such as Proverbs 1:5–6; 5:1–2; 8:4–9. There the writer proclaims a personal, Wisdom–style instruction for life (cf. Proverbs 3:1; 4:2 and 7:2) which is couched in the verse style of ‘similitudes’ or ‘sayings’ and ‘riddles’. The content of the discourse refers to history from primeval times.

Hossfeld and Zenger (2005:294–295) state concerning verses 3–4 (first half of the first strophe) that the term  $\text{מִן־קִדְמֹן}$  (“of old”) in verse 2 inspires the proclamation of YHWH’s glorious, mighty, and wonderful deeds (verse 4) which, in history, appear more frequently in the texts relating to the Asaph psalms: glorious deeds (Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 63:7; Psalm 22:4 [redactional]); mighty deeds (cf. Psalm 77:15); wonders (Psalm 72:18; 75:2; 78:11, 32; 107 passim; cf. 77:12, 15). They reference Psalm 44:2 which follows a similar pattern, citing Clifford 1981:121–141).

They describe verse 5 as starting with the historical narrative, and which then immediately moves from YHWH's wonders to obligation to the law. They refer to Exodus 34:10–11 making a similar transition. The fact that the history of Israel begins with the institution of the law is reminiscent of Ezekiel 20:5–7, they state (294–295). Also they recall the obligation to 'hand on the faith', more precisely YHWH's acts in history and His law (referring to verses 5a–b relating to Psalm 81:6, Deuteronomy 27:26 and 2 Kings 23:24). In their reference to verses 5b–c and 6 (including the insertion) verse 6a is described in terms of three generations—to each is accorded proclamation and narrative. This is tangible evidence of the influence of the so-called culture of memory in Deuteronomic–Deuteronomistic circles (as cited from Campbell 1979:51–59). Hossfield and Zenger (2005:294–295) state that with regard to the three generations, one could first think of the three ancestral generations of Jacob/Israel, Joseph and Ephraim named in the Psalm, and also (in historical progression) to a broader concept of the generations from the exodus generation, to the generation that occupied the land, and leaving open the following, third generation. They refer to the double name of the people of God that is typical of Psalm 78, 'Jacob/Israel' in verses 5, 21, and 71, as having parallels in the Asaph psalms (76:2, 7, and 81:5) and in exilic prophecy in Ezekiel 20:5; Isaiah 40:27.

In discussing Psalm 78: 7–8, Hossfield and Zenger (2005:294–295) name the fundamental perspective for the whole historical narrative and present Israel's ideal behaviour as paradigm. They describe this ideal as a mixture of Wisdom language and Deuteronomistic formulations: Israel is to put its trust in God—an expression occurring only four other times in the Old Testament (Psalm 49:14; Proverbs 3:26; Job 8:14; 31:24). There is a call not to forget God's deeds, as was the case in Hosea 2:15 and 4:6, and frequently forgetting God, God's commandments, and God's deeds expressed in an accusatory manner in Deuteronomy 6:12; 8:11 and 26:13. The instruction is to keep the commandments (cf. Proverbs 6:20) and one should distance oneself from the bad example of some ancestors, as is indicated in verse 8 (cf. Deuteronomy 32:20 and Psalm 51:12).

VanGemeren (1991:505–507), in analysing Psalm 78, first considers verses 1–4 (a Call to Wisdom) and then verses 5–8 (Past and Future Generations). He states that the purpose of the introduction is to arouse attention in the manner used by the

prophets of Israel and sages. He links the importance of the 'teaching' (*tôrāh* 'instruction,' in verse 1) to the insights gleaned from Israel's history. Hence the first word of the psalmist is 'hear' (or 'give ear'; cf. 49:1; Proverbs 7:24 and Isaiah 28:23 and is synonymous with 'listen', literally 'stretch your ear'). 'The words of my mouth' (cf. 19:14; 54:2; Deuteronomy 32:1) are words of wisdom, expressed in 'parables' (*māšāl*, 'proverbial form of teaching,' verse. 2; cf. Proverbs 1:6) 'proverbs' in NIV) and in 'riddles' ('hidden things,' NIV; cf. Proverbs 1:6, 'riddles of the wise'; 49:4). The 'riddles' were not 'hidden things' as the psalmist claims, 'We have heard and known' the parables and riddles (verse 3). The wisdom communicated from the fathers to each new generation pertains to the 'praiseworthy deeds' and the demonstration of 'his power, and the wonders' (verse 4).

The history of redemption is revelatory, as Van Gemeren (1991:505–507) points out. The Lord's mighty acts reveal His love, mercy and patience with His people, especially as in so many instances He has to deal with a 'rebellious people' (cf. verse 8). He cites Jesus' use of parables as a form of 'hiding' the revelation of God from all who were hardened in their hearts (cf. Matthew 13:35). He refers to Calvin's comment on the fact that the majesty of God revealed in this Psalm affects true believers

If in this psalm there shines forth such a majesty as may justly stir up and inflame the readers with a desire to learn, we gather from it with what earnest attention it becomes us to receive the gospel, in which Christ opens and displays to us the treasures of his celestial wisdom (1847:Vol.3:228).

VanGemeren (1991:505–507) states that the goal of the wisdom teacher is to open Israel's history from God's perspective. "Telling" (*mesapperîm*, pl. participle) 'the next generation' (verse 4) continues the tradition "heard and known" from the fathers (verse 3; cf. 44:1) according to him. He comments that the acts of God draw attention to God's deeds and not primarily to the rebellious spirit of man. These deeds include revealing his "power" ('*ezûz* i.e., strength in battle; cf. 145:6; Isaiah 42:25 ['anger']) his 'glorious' acts ('praiseworthy deeds,' NIV; cf. 65:1) and the 'wonders'.

When discussing the past and future generations, from verses 5–8, VanGemeren (1991:505–507) states that each generation must remember that it was the Lord Himself who revealed the divine oracles to Israel (verse 5; cf. Romans 3:2) as an expression of the special (sovereign and gracious) covenant relationship that He had established between Himself and Israel. The ultimate aim of teaching this revelation to the children is so that each generation might ‘put their trust in God’ (verse 7) by remembering ‘his deeds’ (MT, “deeds of El”) and by keeping ‘his commands’.

These were God’s purposes for all the tribes of Israel (reference to Jacob, verse 5; cf. 20:1) VanGemeren (1991:505–507) points out. He references Deuteronomy 6:6–9, 20–22; cf. Exodus 10:2; 12:26–27; 13:8 when referring to Moses’ commanding all Israelites, regardless of tribal descent, to instruct their children at home. He refers to this being relevant to the days of bondage in Egypt (505–507). He reminds them to remember their time in the wilderness, and their teachings in God’s covenantal instruction and laws—Each generation must remember who they are, sons of ‘their forefathers—a stubborn and rebellious generation’ (verse 8; cf. verses 9–64). He reminds them to also always be aware that God expects them to be loyal to Him (verses 7–8).

VanGemeren (1991:505–507) states that the ‘hearts’ of the wilderness generation were ‘not loyal’ (*lō’-hēkîn* i.e., not established, verse. 8; cf. 1 Samuel 7:3) and their ‘spirits were not faithful’ (*ne`emnāh* from *’āmēn*; cf. 89:37; 101:6) to God (El, verse 8; cf. verse 7). Instead, they were thoroughly rebellious, as the following verses attempt to demonstrate. He refers to the fact that the Scriptures frequently refer to the generation of the wilderness as being ‘stubborn,’ ‘stiff-necked’ and ‘rebellious,’ (cf. Deuteronomy 9:6–7, 13, 24; 31:27; 32:5, 20; Acts 2:40). He refers to these terms also being applicable to a stubborn son (Deuteronomy 21:18, 20; cf. Jeremiah 5:23).

In considering the present situation in South Africa, I believe that we are no different to those living in Old Testament times, in that we continually forget to consider God and His ways, both in the governance of the country, and in community and family. If we would only carry this imperative from Psalm 78 into all these areas, we would once again receive God’s favour and special blessing, especially for the coming generations.

### 2.3.4.3 Mentorship

It is worthwhile studying a child from the New Testament who received that godly instruction and nurture portrayed in Psalm 78. This child, Timothy, who grew up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, became a godly adult, and his extended nurture was given primarily with the support of his devoted mentor, the apostle Paul. Timothy was the recipient of godly nurture from his mother and grandmother. 'I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well' (2 Timothy 1:5). The teaching he received from the Word in the home went hand-in-hand with the regular spiritual teaching in the synagogue, where he was exposed to the biblical scholars of the time.

Paul talks about his close relationship with Timothy, his knowledge of tears shed in his life, showing his close personal relationship (very different from the superficial relationships so prevalent in the church today). The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy explaining that he was appointed to preach the gospel,

for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you (2 Timothy 1:11–14).

Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:105) comment on 2 Timothy 1:11–14. In verse 11, they argue, the mention of the gospel forms a connecting link to the 'persona' conclusion of the kerygmatic exposition (1 Timothy 1:11) which also, as a transitional passage, is applicable to the present and also binds together the two functions of the apostle, that of the guarantor of the teaching and that of the prototype for suffering. They refer to 'herald' (*κἠρῡξ*) Timothy 2:7).

Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:105) point out that the teacher/mentor must have a godly life-style. Paul displayed such an exemplary character, that the admonitions to

Timothy become statements about Paul himself: that he is not ashamed (1:8, 14; also 1:16) and also that the ‘deposit’ (*παραθήκη*) is being preserved (see 1:14; cf 1 Timothy 6:20) as ‘faith’ entrusted to the church in the form of the tradition (cf. verse 14.60. The term ‘until that day’ [*εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν*] according to Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:105), links the deposit to ‘sound preaching’ (*ὕγιαίνοντες λόγοι*) and ‘the words, which you have heard from me’ (*τοὺς λόγους [οὓς παρ’ ἐμοῦ ἤκουσας]*). The ‘in faith and love’ (*ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ*) connects with verse 13, specifically with the main verb, because they characterise the religious status of the Christian.

2 Timothy 3:14–17 shows the importance of a godly home, and then the importance of nurture for mentors from the family of God—relationship-building as well as godly teaching. Paul gives a profound admonition to Timothy, one on which he wanted him to have a focus as a life-priority—one which believers should take to heart:

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

#### **2.3.4.4 Warnings against false teaching**

Earle (1981:409–410) refers to Paul’s warnings about the false teaching of the time in 2 Timothy 3, where he cautions Timothy in verses 14, 15 not to be led astray by these impostors. Instead, he is to continue in what he had learned and had ‘become convinced of’ (*epistōthēs*, only here in the NT)—firm persuasion and assurance. Referring to his teachers—his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice (1:5) as the next clause shows: ‘and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures’, Earle (409–410) cites Bernard (1899:135) as stating, ‘It was the custom to teach Jewish children the law at a very early age, and to cause them to commit parts of it to memory’. Timothy’s heritage included ‘The holy Scriptures’ is ta hiera grammata

(literally ‘the sacred writings’) an expression found in both Philo (Life of Moses, iii.39) and Josephus (Antiq. x.10.4) for the OT, taught to Timothy as a child. Earle (409–410) comments that these Old Testament Scriptures were able to make Timothy “wise” in preparation ‘for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus’. They disciplined him in obedience to God and also pointed forward to the coming Messiah, making available salvation by faith in Him.

Verses 15 and 16 are vital to our faith. Many liberal scholars are not accepting that Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation. One wonders if part of the problem is that they do not accept the Scriptures as God-given and are therefore not open to the power of God to make them personal to those who read them. This is so foundational to what we teach the next generation because of the post-modern tolerance of man’s beliefs and lack of acceptance of God’s truth, as clearly indicated in scriptures like John 14:6, where Jesus states that He is ‘the truth’. Thus relativity undermines our God and our faith and makes each person his own ‘god’. As a result, there will not be godly nurture and direction for the next generation from those ‘false teachers’ unless the lost ground of scriptures like Deuteronomy 6, Psalm 78 and 2 Timothy 3 is recaptured, as God would have us do. Therefore this is an imperative for the church—to return to 100 per cent acceptance of the infallibility of Scripture, to the fact that Jesus is the Way and the Truth and the Life and that no-one can come to the Father except through Him (John 14:6).

Earle (1981:409–410) elaborates on verse 16: ‘All Scripture is God-breathed.’—exactly as the Greek indicates. The adjective *theopneustos* (only here in the New Testament) is compounded of *theos*, ‘God’, and the verb *pneō*, ‘breathe’. He comments that this is one of the greatest texts in the New Testament on the inspiration of the Bible. He refers to 2 Peter 1:21, which indicates something of how the divine inspiration took place.

Earle (1981:409-410) states that ‘Teaching’ (*didaskalia*) is the most general. ‘Rebuking’ (*elegmos*, only here in the NT) is used for ‘conviction’ of a sinner in LXX (Numbers 5:18ff.). ‘Correcting’ (*epanorthōsin* only here) literally means ‘restoration to an upright position or a right state’. *Paideia* (‘training’) comes from *pais*, ‘child’. So he argues that it originally meant ‘the rearing of a child’. Later then, it came to mean

‘training, learning, instruction’. Christians need to be trained in ‘righteousness’—both inwardly and outwardly, is his conclusion.

In Earle’s (1981:409–410) discussion of verse 17 he states that the purpose of Scripture is that ‘the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work’. He notes that Bernard (1899:137) states that there is no evidence in the context that the inspiration of the Scriptures was being called into question. He also states that the emphasis of the entire passage is on the usefulness of the Scriptures in fitting the believer for service. Bernard notes that this was the interpretation of Origen, the Vulgate and Syriac versions, Martin Luther, and also the early English translations of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, and Cranmer.

As we consider the believer being equipped for service of the Lord it naturally leads us to thoughts of the great Helper, the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised to His disciples:

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you (John 16:13–14).

The consideration of the fact that the Holy Spirit will help the believer to remember what he has been taught is something for which Christians are grateful: ‘But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you’ John 14:26. The reminder is the fact that if a child is trained from an early age, when he is old he shall not depart from what he is taught (Proverbs 22:6) and particularly if the child has received salvation and has received godly nurture there is much hope for him as an adult. ‘And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ’ (Philippians 1:6).

#### **2.3.4.5 Worship**

Keith White (2012:28-29) discusses worship in the Old Testament and the fact that children were incorporated together with the family in religious events. He refers to

the fact that children were very much involved in the Passover celebration. In Exodus 12, he notes that children were expected to ask the meaning of the Passover. The whole family worshipped the Lord:

You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. And when you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. And when your children say to you, "What do you mean by this service?' you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed their heads and worshipped (Exodus 12: 24–27).

It was specifically mentioned that the children should understand the symbolism and the memory of God's deliverance when He dried the Red Sea so the people could go to the other side. The twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal as a memorial to this deliverance.

And he said to the people of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in times to come, 'What do these stones mean?' then you shall let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.' For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever" (Joshua 4: 20–24).

In Ezra 10 when the Israelites repented of having taken foreign wives and having families out of God's will, the whole assembly came to repent and worship God, and Ezra and all the people, including children, wept before the Lord: 'While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children, gathered to him out of Israel, for the people wept bitterly' (Ezra10:1).

The references to Samuel serving in the temple and being told by Eli to reply to God that He should speak because his servant was listening, show a young child communicating with God and having been given the trust by God to convey a serious message to Eli, who had not intervened in disciplining his sons who were evil priests. Children were part of the crowd listening when Joshua renewed the covenant vows to God.

A significant verse showing children as worshippers is found in Psalm 8:2: 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies to silence the foe and the avenger.' White (2012:29) states,

Children are ordained and designed to praise God and His glory. They are not consumers or future adults, but worshippers of the Creator God. Their ears, eyes, feet, hands and voices have been created to praise God. This is their true nature and purpose. But more than this they have a special role in silencing the enemies of God. When all else fails, it is children (like Samuel and David, for example) who will be the means of moral and spiritual virtue and power. Isn't this remarkable? The child is being portrayed morally and spiritually as the "father of the man".

God wants our worship. He is not just referring to adults when He speaks about keeping the Sabbath and wanting quality worship—the best music, expertly played: 'Sing to him a new song; play skilfully on the strings, with loud shouts' (Psalm 33:3). Children were taught to play musical instruments. David played his lyre for Saul when he was still a young man—not long after he had killed Goliath (1 Samuel 19).

Worship was important for the whole family, for example, in keeping the Sabbath. This is in contrast with contemporary society, which sets a bad example for the children by often treating the Sabbath as an ordinary day for personal pleasures, in direct disobedience to Isaiah 58:13 and 14. Isaiah 58:13 reads, 'If you stop trampling on the day of worship and doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the day of worship a delight and the LORD'S holy day honourable, if you honour it by not going your own way, by not going out when you want, and by not talking idly, then you will find joy in the LORD.'

Freeman (1996:355–356) describes the common custom for Jewish parents to bring their children to men noted for piety to receive their blessing and prayers, and that on the child's first birthday a child was blessed by the rabbi in the synagogue. The laying-on of hands when in prayer was also customary when invoking the Divine blessing, for example, the elderly Israel laying hands on the heads of Ephraim and Manasseh, blessing them and praying for them (Genesis 43:14) and Jesus doing the same with little children (Mark10:16).

Freeman (1996:360) describes how Jewish children, when very young, were taught to wave palm branches and boughs of willow and myrtle bound together to be used at the Feast of Tabernacles, and, while shaking them, singing the chorus of Hosannah to God. This they did when welcoming Jesus as King when He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey: 'Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"'(Matthew 21:8–9). Freeman comments that they were responding in recollection of what they had been taught—the custom of early training in the worship of God. He refers to this training of carrying these bundles as being a precursor for each person carrying his own phylacteries of scriptures.

The New Testament reference which I wish to refer to specifically is Galatians 4:4, 'But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"' Fathers should lift up Jesus and encourage children towards a personal relationship with Him as adopted sons into the family of God and where 'Abba' (Daddy) Father can be said because Jesus is our Lord and Saviour.

Smail (2006:159) refers to the Trinitarian self-revelation in Christ—that He is the sovereign initiating source whose love of mankind causes His provisions and interventions. Smail speaks of the Father being pro-active and not just intervening reactively. He refers to Jesus operating in the power of the Holy Spirit whom He

receives from His Father and gives to us (167), 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour' (Luke 4:18–19). The rewards are immense: 'The righteous who walks in his integrity—blessed are his children after him!' (Proverbs 20:7).

Zuck (1996:113) mentions the importance of worship and the importance of family and community worship. He refers to biblical ceremonies and the impact these must have had on the children, and that we should emulate leading our children in worship in the home.

#### **2.3.4.6 We need to provide for our children**

As we consider the importance of holistic provision for the children, we see that physical provision as well as spiritual provision is important. Even Jesus received holistic care as a child—'And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man' (Luke 2:52). Parents need to consider holistic needs. Mentors and godly parents who extend themselves on behalf of other children, within the church and without, should also consider their holistic needs.

In 1 Timothy 5:8, Paul says that if a parent does not provide for his family he is worse than an unbeliever. Sometimes material provision is required to help a neglected hungry child in need. Zuck (1996:115) refers to the need for a father to provide for his child. For me Luke 11:11–13 is important in that it shows how human fathers need to provide the right things for their children, and how much more our heavenly Father gives the right things to His children. 'What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

### 2.3.4.7 The salvation of children

It is because of God's wonderful love for us, and the believer's experience of this love that motivates him to love others and to share God's greatest with others. Our whole motivation for teaching our children the ways of God is because of God's love for us: 'In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another' (1 John 4:10–11).

I believe that for a parent to place the child in a position to accept Jesus as Saviour and to receive the Holy Spirit as a result, is the best provision a parent can ever make, because this involves receiving eternal life.

Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.  
Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:10–12).

Nolland (1998: 630–632), points out that as earthly fathers we provide what will properly nurture our children in their needs. So it is with God, but how much more! He affirms that we hand out good things to our children; God will not even withhold His Holy Spirit from us. He makes an important comment—'not of course that the Holy Spirit is supposed to substitute for all our other needs'. He mentions the starving person who needs physical food saying that it is rather that the gift of the Holy Spirit as God's highest gift should give us every assurance that He will not withhold from us anything that we need. Nolland states that that this 'parable of the father and his son and the decent provision even given by a sinful father (fish and egg rather than a serpent or scorpion), and the superlative provision of the Heavenly Father, shows a basic principle of the logic of the Fatherhood of God presented to us in stark simplicity—His care is far above that of any human being.

The contrast between the fish and serpent and the egg and scorpion, is so great, in my mind it raises the question of what parents might inadvertently allow to poison the

spiritual lives of their children, as would be the case in negative media such as pornography.

The salvation of every child is important to the Lord! We must win this generation for Christ. When children are exposed to evangelism, a process of presenting the Good News about Christ, they can respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting to make a personal commitment to Christ's offer of salvation, as well as being instrumental in bringing others to the Lord—mainly through their testimony about their own personal change in Christ. A child can make a clear commitment to the Lord at an early age and with full understanding of God's love, his own sin, God's forgiveness and Jesus' willingness to be personal Lord and Saviour, Jesus death on the cross and His resurrection. Even the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a child's life and the implications of a young life lived in that power is a wonderful, significant promise of a fulfilled purposeful life.

How wonderful is it for a child who has been abused and neglected, to find a personal relationship with Abba Father. A child can receive the same divine help from the Holy Spirit as an adult—conviction of sin, teaching of truth and divine comfort. John 14:16 states, 'And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.' Psalm 82:3–4 states, 'Defend the rights of the poor and the orphans; be fair to the needy and the helpless. Rescue them from the power of evil people.'

#### **2.3.4.8 Advocacy of children**

The declaration of intent from the 2012 Transform World Global Summit held in Bali during November 2012, included advocacy in churches and a special appeal to churches to become acquainted with local orphans and to extend help to them in the form of spiritual discipleship, but also to teach them skills. In the Human Rights Challenge, one of the tracks of the Summit, there is an appeal for Christians to fight for the preservation of human dignity from a biblical perspective, promoting the knowledge of God creating man in His own image for His glory. This would directly affect abused and neglected children if taken to heart.

Part of the provision a father can give his children is also to teach survival skills; this holistic approach is important. The fact that education must extend to self-sustainable projects in skills and farming is important—the spiritual is insufficient.

Abraham left Ur with a heritage of a rich agricultural knowledge. In Chaldean and Jewish culture education also encompassed agriculture. The children and families were also involved in subsistence farming of crops and sheep and cattle, and as is mentioned by Gower and Wright (1987), they would have had to learn to use implements such as stone ploughshares, and flint sickles (from Abrahams' heritage from Chaldea), and together with digging irrigation ditches from the rivers, would plant two crops per season.

#### **2.3.4.9 We must apply godly discipline to our children**

Considering God the Father desiring a personal relationship with us, and His great love for us, brings us back to the reminder that His nature is that of love, but also of being holy—intolerant of sin. Because of that fact, He disciplines His children so that they can be directed towards a life of holiness. If parents do not apply discipline in their children's lives they can expect the children to grow up without secure understanding of the importance of boundaries and of good controlled behaviour. God disciplines those He loves and He expects the same of human fathers.

There are many Scriptures in Proverbs concerning how fathers and mothers should nurture their children:

'My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, and for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights' Proverbs. 3:11–12. The child needs to understand that a father's discipline is for his own good. Just as God is loving, but also holy and just, parents must be loving and also intolerant of sin and just, and this implies the need to apply discipline and giving boundaries.

'Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death' (Proverbs 19:18). Again, these qualities need to be intentionally taught to parents and to train within and without the church for the sake of the children.

‘Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die’ (Proverbs 23:13). We are sometimes concerned about hurting our children with a spanking, whereas we should rather think ahead about the long-term effect of not nipping a problem in the bud.

‘The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother’ (Proverbs 29:15). If we do not discipline a child when he is young, when he is older it is much more difficult to discipline him. He will not take his parents seriously if he is not taught these principles early in his life.

‘Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart’ (Proverbs 29:17). This affirms the previous comment—if well-disciplined when young he is likely to be disciplined in nature and less likely to be rebellious or difficult when older.

Zuck has much to say about discipline (1998:36). I quote:

According to an increasing number of sociologists and psychologists, many problems in child behaviour stem from letting children have unrestricted freedom. Undisciplined children become maladjusted children. Allowed to do what they please, children soon have no respect for authority, insist on having their own way and become uncontrollable. To fail to direct and discipline children, to raise them in an atmosphere of unbridled permissiveness contributes to their rebellious behaviour. No wonder our children are in trouble.

I believe that we need to apply these standards in order to give a new sense of security to our children. I also believe that if we explain the required standards of behaviour and the carefully considered consequences of disobedience which we administer for the benefit of the child, we are obeying God in having a protective, caring and nurturing attitude. Because applying discipline is a controversial topic world-wide, with the rejection by many (even authorities) of biblical disciplinary measures, such as applying the rod in certain instances (for example ‘Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die’ [Proverbs 23:13]), and because many parents do not apply enough discipline and others

actually abuse their children with the rod, it is necessary to investigate the topic further. The hitting of children can be malicious, with no intent to teach righteous behaviour, but simply almost as a scapegoat for anger. This has a bearing on the help and healing required for neglected or maladjusted children, I believe that it is worth some consideration. Zuck (1996:21) includes certain Scriptures which show God's heart on this matter. He speaks about the fact that every child is inclined towards misconduct, acquired at birth. He quotes Proverbs 22:15, 'Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.' He states that children do not welcome discipline, but to reject it 'is a sign of folly'. Proverbs 1:7b substantiates this, 'fools despise wisdom and instruction', as does Proverbs 15:5a, 'A fool despises his father's instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is prudent.' He rightly argues that parental discipline reveals love for the child, and to withhold it shows a lack of love. In this vein, 'Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him' (Proverbs 13:24) and 'Whoever ignores instruction despises himself' (Proverbs 15:32a) give clear guide-lines on God's way of perceiving discipline.

When Zuck (1996:123) discusses the rod, which is very pertinent to the subject of physical abuse, a violation of the person, he states that the Bible approves of physical punishment but that this does not justify extreme or harsh or unreasonable punishment of the child. He states, after quoting several Scriptures referring to fools despising discipline, for example, Proverbs 1:7b, 'and mocking making amends for sin' (Proverbs 14:9), that physical punishment should be limited to children's persistently sinful, God-defying actions. He adds Proverbs 16:22b, 'Folly brings punishment to fools'. Foolish (that is wicked) children need punishment, because without it they bring bitterness and disgrace to their mothers and fathers (Proverbs 10:1b;17:21,25;19:13a). Zuck (123) quotes Proverbs 15:31, 'The ear that listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.' He affirms that verbal correction or rebuke has its place, and a child who accepts this discipline is wise.

Regarding scriptures outside of Proverbs a very good example of lack of parental discipline and the consequences is cited by Zuck (1996:123), as he points to the lack of restraint of Eli, when his sons, even as priests, were in direct opposition to God and he died as a result.

And Eli said, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you." So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, "It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him." And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground (1 Samuel 3:17–19).

Another example of a weak attitude in this field of fatherly discipline is David, when Amnon raped his sister, Tamar, and when Adonijah tried to usurp the throne. He concludes the topic of fatherly discipline by referring to the *blessing* of God's discipline (Psalm 94:12) and the fact that we should not be discouraged when God disciplines us—He is disciplining us as sons (Hebrews 12: 5-8).

Barna (2003:45) states that God loves children enough to ensure that they receive discipline. He says that regardless of how that shaping is provided, it is a reflection of His passion for the well-being of a child: 'Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord' (Ephesians 6:4). Anders (1999:112–113) states that in Ephesians 6:4, growing up in a Christian home is intended to be a very positive experience for both parent and child when each plays his proper role—the father's role is not to exasperate his children but to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Hendriksen and Kistemaker (2001:261–263) in discussing this verse, state that the instruction to fathers not to provoke their children to anger is a fair admonition. They point out that the duty of wives or of slaves is not stressed at the expense of that of husbands/masters. Similarly, the admonition addressed to fathers follows immediately after that directed to children (to honour and obey parents in 4:1–2). They note that in verse 1 Paul employs the more usual word for parents and that this therefore seems to indicate that here in verse 4 fathers means parents. They remark that the word 'father' could have been used to address heads of their respective families on whom the chief responsibility for the education of the children rests, and that they may need that admonition the most.

The parallel passage (Colossians 3:21) has: 'Fathers, do not exasperate your children', meaning: 'Do not embitter them or stir them up.' Hendriksen and

Kistemaker (2001:261-263) state that there is little difference between that admonition and 'Do not provoke your children to anger.' The cognate noun is 'angry mood' (4:26). They list some ways in which parents may become guilty of this error in bringing up their children:

1. By over-protection—the over-protective attitude has the tendency of depriving the children of confidence and of instilling in them the angry mood, especially when they compare themselves with other children who are not receiving this special treatment.
2. By favouritism—Isaac favoured Esau above Jacob, and Rebekah preferred Jacob above Esau (Genesis 25:28). This partiality caused much heart-ache.
3. By discouragement—the example given is of a child sharing a dream about a vocation for the future and the father saying: 'You might as well forget about that. That will never happen anyway.'
4. By intolerance of the growing-up process—not acknowledging that the child has a right to have his own ideas, and the need not be just like his father to be a success.
5. By neglect—Hendriksen and Kistemaker (261-263) suggest that the quarrel between David and his son Absalom was partly due to the fact that David neglected him (2 Samuel 14:13, 28).
6. By bitter words and actual physical abuse—where a father continually reprimands his children and inflicts severe physical punishment almost out of habit (and sometimes irrespective of age).

Hendriksen and Kistemaker (2001:261-263) state that Paul places the positive over against the negative by reminding parents to rear their children tenderly and remind the reader about the instructions in Deuteronomy 5:29—that this nurture includes spiritual, mental and physical care. Hendriksen and Kistemaker (261-263) draw attention to the discipline and admonition of the Lord, including His chastening (Hebrews 12), which though at the time it is administered is unpleasant, is afterward appreciated and produces excellent fruit (cf. I Corinthians 11:32; 2 Corinthians 6:9; 2 Timothy 2:25 and 3:16 where this 'discipline' is the 'training in righteousness'). They state that discipline can thus be described as training by means of rules and regulations, rewards, and when necessary, punishments and that it refers primarily

to what is done to the child. They argue that all of this discipline and admonition must be 'of the Lord', amounting to Christian training and including giving the child a noble example of Christian life and conduct, one deserving of the Lord's approval.

For me, one of the most important considerations in the administering of discipline is that it must not be done in anger, but must suit the wrong committed, with the child understanding the reason for it being given. I would add that because God is always "slow to anger and abounding in love" (Exodus 34:6; Psalm 103:8), we need to have the same attitude.

#### **2.3.4.10 Reconciliation**

The aspect of parents' disciplining their children is important, but they need to show unconditional love by their willingness to forgive and 'move on' from the problem, just as Father God shows His love for us. Parents should overtly show love to their children, express their love in word and deed as a natural outflowing from desiring the best for their well-being, and this should be the norm (Genesis 22:2 mentions God addressing Abraham about the son whom he loves).

Malachi 4:4–6 tells of God doing a work of reconciliation between fathers and children:

Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.

Smith (1998:340–342) states that there are two conclusions to the book of Malachi. One is an imperative to remember the Torah of Moses. He refers to the exhortation to remember, used thirteen times in the book of Deuteronomy, as Deuteronomic. He comments on the fact that to 'remember' in the Old Testament means far more than to recall or think about a past event. It always involves action. He cites Childs (1978: 51–52) as saying that God remembers and forgets (Psalm 88:5, [Eng. 88:4]; 106:4;

Jeremiah 31:20; 44:21). When God forgives sin, He forgets (Jeremiah 31:34). Childs says, 'there are no examples where this reflection does not issue in the objective intervention toward that which was remembered. Memory is not identical with action, but it is never divorced from it'.

Later, when Israel was commanded to remember the law, statutes and ordinances of Moses, she was not merely to relive the past because much of that was painful, but also to link the commandments of Moses as events in the covenant history to the present and future obedience of Israel. I find these comments very significant as one considers the need to return to God and to be reconciled to Him and to one another. God forgives and forgets. Humans are inclined to remember and to hold grudges. Fathers and children need to be reconciled and this was a major task of Jesus, our Messiah.

Colossians 1:19–23 reveals Jesus as the one who reconciles us to God and reminds us to continue in the faith and all that that implies—for parents and children.

For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

#### **2.3.4.11 Remediation for lack of fatherly care**

I do not find cases of child neglect and abandonment of children in Scripture. Extended family and the levirate system of care of widows and their offspring were the norm in Bible times. Zuck (1996:108) emphasises the stability of the family, due mainly to the definite leadership of the father. I quote,

In Bible times family solidarity existed because of the central father figure. How different from so many families today in which fathers neglect their wives and children. One of the reasons for the moral malady and spiritual sickness is the decline in strong fatherly leadership. Children are destitute because fathers are deserting their roles! We need to return to biblical patterns of loving, patriarchal headship.

White (2009:139) speaks about God's compassion as being like that of a father to a child (Psalm 103). He refers to the fact that Wisdom literature is written largely from a father for his son, for example, Psalm 34; Proverbs 1–7. White says that the mother/child relationship was often used to portray the bond between God and us. He points to Psalm 131 describing the weaned child as representing the 'still quietened soul'. He quotes Isaiah 66:13, 'As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.'

As previously mentioned, two of the characteristics of hurting children are depression and low self-image. Much can be said of the importance of encouragement. Zuck (1996:114) points to Paul writing to believers to 'encourage each other' (1 Thessalonians 4:18) and 'build each other up' (1 Thessalonians 5:11). I believe that one of the most profound Scriptures which could be a motto for this thesis—and for Christian efforts at helping children in crisis, is the exhortation from Paul to the Thessalonian Christians, 'For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.' Verse 13 would be the prayer of praise and thanks for every child who responds to the Lord, is converted and finds Him as Lord and Saviour, 'And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.'

We know that knowledge is not automatic—it has to be taught. Scripture clearly calls parents to train each child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6), for better or for worse. We therefore have to do much

in undoing the damage inflicted on young children by ungodly home influences. It is important to be a role model Christian family for children from dysfunctional families, for them to see God's love in reality in a loving Christian family—this gives them hope for the future. This is an imperative for the church family.

Zuck (1996:106) affirms the biblical roles and responsibilities of parents. Adam and Eve were to bear children and Abraham was blessed with children. He takes us straight into the contemporary issues of absent fathers and loss of godly family structures and concludes that children without one or both parents are adversely affected, often being socially disadvantaged and 'scarred'. In addition, many fathers have abandoned their child-rearing responsibilities, having left the task of raising the children to their wives.

Zuck (1996:108) emphasises the father's role as head of the home (Ephesians 5:23) and his responsibility for its physical and spiritual welfare (Genesis 18:19). No godly father abdicated his responsibilities to his wife, and yet mothers were actively engaged in child-rearing, along with their husbands, managing their homes (1 Timothy 5:14). He affirms that children are destitute because fathers are deserting their roles and so need to return to the biblical patterns of a loving, but patriarchal headship.

Marcia Bunge (2007:227–229) speaks about the vocation of parenting and its implications for the church, particularly in view of the break-down of the family. This is very relevant as we consider Deuteronomy 5:5–6 and God's call on parents to live a godly life-style and to daily teach their children to love and honour Him. Bunge states, 'The Church must find ways to help all children by supporting primary care-givers in the sacred task of parenting and by ensuring that all children find the love and care they need.'

George Barna (2003:44) shows how important children are to God and the direct link to family care. He is clear that they are a gift from God, as a sign of His love (Deuteronomy 7:13; Psalm 127:3). He points out that adults receive special blessings through their children (Numbers 5:28; Deuteronomy 28:4 and 11; Lamentations 24–25). The question that comes to mind is, 'How many parents are emotionally as well as physically absent from their children, and miss out on these

blessings?’ Children are valuable to God and He asks us to protect them (1 Samuel 20:42 and Ezra 8:21).

Zuck (1996:108) refers to parental responsibilities other than leadership, namely prayer for our children. David prayed for Solomon, ‘Give my son, Solomon the wholehearted devotion to keep your commands, requirements and decrees’ (1 Chronicles 29:19). He refers to dedication of children to the Lord; even Jesus was ‘presented to the Lord’ (Luke 2:22).

The Proverbs 31 woman is an ideal example of what *should* happen. In 31:26–27 we are told that she ‘opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household.’ The widow at Zaraphath too, made sure there was enough flour and oil for herself and her son (1 Kings 17:10–12). She also extends herself to care for the poor. Titus 2:3-5 imperatives for women, when training other women, include teaching them to love their husbands and children, to be kind, pure, submissive and to show hospitality. The Christian household should extend hospitality and in so doing show God’s love for the outsider.

An abusive neglectful father can really only have a new approach to his children when he cares for them and stops the abuse through the miraculous intervention of God—just as the mainstream human being cannot become a ‘better person’ just by his own willpower. Conviction of sin, remorse, repentance and a ‘new heart’ wrought by the Holy Spirit will really result in the successful rehabilitation of victimisers of children. 2 Corinthians 5:17 states, ‘Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.’ God can change us from within and give us a whole new perspective as the Bible and testimony of born-again believers affirm. Martin (1998:152) in discussing this verse states: τὰ ἀρχαῖα, ‘the old order’ means the old world of sin and death, but also the realm of the σάρξ, ‘flesh.’ It has ‘gone’ in the sense that its regime is broken, though its power remains (Gal 5:16–21, 24) to be neutralised in Christ.

### **3. The need for the church to intentionally train parents, children and carers in biblical values, and especially in sexual purity**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The imperatives for parents to give spiritual nurture to their children, showing the Father-heart of God in the process, have been expounded in detail, and should be applied beyond the physical family to the spiritual nurture of children outside of the family. One could further mention some of these godly biblical values by name, for example, humility, stewardship, work ethic, attitudes towards authority, faithfulness, honesty and others which I believe would come into general biblical teaching and could fall into the imperative for parents to teach their children and for the church to teach godly biblical values.

The necessity to address the imperative of sexual purity in a specific sense is because of the level of crisis in this area in South Africa, both for adults and children, and the lack of intentional teaching on this subject. Thus, I will devote this imperative to the overt teaching of sexual purity.

I believe that intentional teaching has to be given concerning crisis areas in the lives of hurting children. I therefore refer to content which could be taught from the manual for children in crisis in South Africa, which I prepared for this thesis as a pilot programme, giving simple explanations (for use by teens particularly) on alcoholism, grief, dysfunctional families and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and abuse. I will specifically now give content to the biblical imperative to teach intentionally concerning one of the greatest problems facing children today, and which is not addressed properly either by family, the church or the schools: sexual purity. In fact, the media and social influences and pressures are undermining godly biblical principles which exist, but which are not taught sufficiently. Perhaps the seriousness of the problem is because of the onslaught of the media and other influences on anti-biblical values as is the case with acceptance of gay and lesbian relationships, promiscuity and adultery. The imperative rises out of anti-biblical influences concerning sexual behaviour, and about the omission of overt training of biblical principles in this connection.

Society's rejection of standards of morality is noteworthy. In that regard Zuck (1996:26), highlights rejection of moral absolutes. Where children are raised with this humanistic value system, as he describes it, they do not have a secure base for a value platform, and especially a biblical worldview. In my own youth, Scripture lessons were taught daily in government schools. I remember being taught basic biblical values like the Ten Commandments. Multi-faith life skills lessons do not show the importance of obeying God and perpetuating obedience to Him as being non-negotiable, as was the case in the Old Testament teaching. Zuck (26) states that where there is no moral accountability

Human beings are thus free to embrace promiscuous sex, abortion, and self-focused pleasure without restraint and concern for others. Sexual experimentation, acceptability of homosexuality as a legitimate lifestyle, distribution of pornographic literature to children and even mocking of religious—these symptoms demonstrate the alarming deterioration of spiritual values and ethical ideals.

Intentional teaching in church, in Christian Schools or by Christians dealing with Life Skills in Public Schools or in Sunday Schools must be theoretical but also experiential. Relationships with children's Sunday School teachers are vital. They must witness them in life-style, which has to be one of integrity and above reproach, where the mentor has the attitude expressed in Psalm 86:11: 'Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.' The children would also benefit greatly by having the opportunity to see them in action in ministry—perhaps accompany them on a ministry outing to orphans or the elderly, and have the opportunity to pray with them. This would help them to understand the practical love of God shed abroad. Paramount is an accurate presentation of the Gospel.

A Youth Survey was conducted world-wide by a Christian Mission Group known as One Hope, over several years, and I report on some of the responses of South African youth. In the quantitative study of the Spiritual State of the World's Children (2009:5–6 and 9–10), in the report of the 4288 South African youth surveyed (age 13–18), with 6% more girls than boys interviewed, the responses show the

importance of the need to focus ministry in certain areas, especially in areas like sexual purity. The survey was conducted between August 2007 and November 2009. The most note-worthy responses in terms of sexual morality/immorality I have listed below:

- 30% had already had sexual intercourse.
- 73% report that if they were not a virgin and could change the past they would have sex after marriage.
- 62% would like to be a virgin at marriage.
- Most stated that they were likely to learn about sex from classmates, friends and textbooks, and least likely from their parents.
- 68% had a pragmatic view on sexual morality and stated that 'if it worked' it could be justified.
- 36% had watched a pornographic movie or had read a pornographic magazine.

The above statistics are a reflection on 2007–2009, and the increase of technology and internet accessibility would lead us to believe that the situation is likely to be worse in the three or four years following the survey.

I can thus say we need as Christians to teach biblical moral standards, and other God-honouring values, especially from a biblical worldview. This need is in the home and for Christian teachers to promote in public schools where there is no space for overt biblical and specifically Christian value-teaching to take place. A strong foundation of biblical, moral and ethical values will help towards developing strong, confident and purposeful young people. We need to teach the biblical perspective against socially de-valuing anti-biblical practices like abortion and same-sex marriages, which are clear contradictions of Scripture. We need to teach about God's anger about fornication (promiscuous behaviour) and adultery, which was considered so serious in Old Testament times that it was punishable by severe penalties, including death. We need to teach about a healthy home, a father and mother and children with God's order of leadership. Sexual union in the confines of marriage should be shown to be healthy and right, as God intended it to be taught.

The church and Christian parents may be correct in stating that they are teaching godly biblical values, but what about overtly teaching about sexual purity? These teachings are foundational, as sexual impurity is so prevalent and is causing major crisis in South Africa and world-wide. This is evidenced by the fact that even Christians (born-again believers) are living together and having sexual union before marriage, thus becoming a stumbling block for children.

The references I would cite as important to share with children, parents and their Sunday School teachers (at age-appropriate levels without compromising the truth) are listed below. Thereafter, certain passages will be exegeted:

1. God's plan is for a man to leave home, cleave to his wife and to be fruitful and multiply with His accompanying blessing (Genesis 1:27–28; 2:24–25).
2. Unhealthy sexual relations (Leviticus 20 and Matthew 5:8).
3. God's anger over sexual perversion and God's anger (Romans 1:18; :27b).
4. The serious penalty for the sexually immoral, namely, not receiving the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9–10).
5. God's reasons against divorce (Malachi 2:15–16).
6. The biblical view of being single, married and divorced (1 Corinthians 7).

### **3.2 Exegesis of major passages concerning sexual purity**

As we explore these passages, we can certainly see how angry God is at sexual immorality. One can ask a number of questions about issues concerning sexual purity and God's anger at sexual immorality. Some questions could include: Why is there still not a conclusive cure for HIV/AIDS? Could it be that the very precious institution of marriage and family is being attacked at its roots? Where are the strong faithful fathers and loving mothers and secure children in their parents' love? Why is there such a great proportion of dysfunction in families? Have some spouses and their families forgotten the seriousness of covenant marriage vows (even for some Christians)? Are some of us disregarding of God's heart values? Are people, including some Christians, in denial that God, as a Holy God, can administer serious punishment for sin. Do we have a bias towards a perception that His love for mankind would excuse some sin?

### **3.2.1 Leviticus: Punishments for sexual immorality**

#### **Leviticus 20:7-14**

This passage issues a clear but solemn warning:

Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. Keep my statutes and do them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you. For anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother; his blood is upon him. If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbour, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. If a man lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death; they have committed perversion; their blood is upon them. If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. If a man takes a woman and her mother also, it is depravity; he and they shall be burned with fire, that there may be no depravity among you.

#### **Leviticus 20:17–23**

Similarly Leviticus 20:17–23 makes God's position unequivocally clear:

If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness, and he shall bear his iniquity. If a man lies with a woman during her menstrual period and uncovers her nakedness, he has made naked her fountain, and she has uncovered the fountain of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from among their people. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for

that is to make naked one's relative; they shall bear their iniquity. If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless. You shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my rules and do them, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out. And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them.

Rooker (2000:269–270), when discussing sexual offenses in Leviticus 20:10–21, states that the death penalty had to be given to both parties in the following cases: adultery (20:10), incest with the father's wife (20:11), incest with a daughter-in-law (20:12), and homosexuality (20:13). If a man married a woman and her mother, the penalty was death by burning for all three of the guilty parties (20:14). Other sexual offenses receive the same punishment (Genesis 38:24; Leviticus 21:9). Rooker states that because it was specified that the method of punishment was to be burning in this case, we should assume the prescribed method in the other capital cases in this context was death by stoning.

A list of a serious of sexual offenses from Leviticus 20:17-21 that do not carry the death penalty, is provided by Rooker (2000:269-270). They include: incest with a half-sister (20:17), sexual relations with a menstruate woman (20:18), incest with an aunt (20:19–20), and adultery with the wife of a biological brother (20:21). Their punishment is 'they must be cut off' (20:17, 18), 'they will be held responsible' (20:17,19,20), and 'they will die/be childless' (20:20, 21). On Leviticus 20:10 Rooker (269–270) references 18:20 for comparison. The law of Israel viewed the sacredness of marriage in a very serious light. Both parties who broke that bond were judged guilty of death. In Deuteronomy this law is compared to the one in Exodus 22:16–17 on forcible rape of a betrothed or married woman. In such a case only the man was guilty and had to die. Rooker compares Leviticus 20:13 with 18:22. He mentions that homosexuality was quite common among the Greeks of a later time and states that the Bible is quite emphatic that it is a serious sin with a resultant death penalty specified. He quotes Romans 1:27 as an example of a New Testament passage that

condemns homosexual acts as shameless perversion. He refers to the legal format being apodictic in chapter 18 and casuistic here. Again Rooker (269–270) compares Leviticus 20 with chapter 18—in this case 20:14 with 18:17. He states that the Hebrew phrase refers to marriage, which would be impossible with a wife and her mother unless the mother were widowed or divorced. Theoretically, he says in a polygamous society such a marriage would be possible, but it was strictly forbidden, as was also marriage with two sisters (18:18). He makes a profound statement which underlies the importance of the overt teaching of the principles portrayed in these Scriptures:

The reason for such prohibitions is reinforced by the necessity to keep the areas of family love and affection among children in the house from the overtones of possible sexual attraction that could lead to incest and weird promiscuity.

The penalty of dying by being ‘burned in the fire’ for incest was regarded as particularly reprehensible, Rooker states (2000:269-270). In two other cases it was prescribed for grave harlotry (Genesis 38:24; Leviticus 21:9). He states that in the case of incest with a full or half-sister (verse 17), which was also forbidden, it did not receive the death penalty (cf. 18:9).

Leviticus 20:22–27 refers to the Israelites being obedient to God in Canaan in order to keep His blessing. This was in common with Leviticus 18:24-30, Rooker states (2000:269-270). Failure to obey God put the Israelites in the position of being abhorred (*uṣ*) by the Lord (20:23). It is stated again that the Israelites were to be different from the nations distinguishing between the clean and the unclean (see Leviticus 11–15) and in observing these differences the Israelites should imitate God (i.e., become holy, 20:26a), for God distinguished Israel from the other nations (20:25a, 26b).

Additional comments on sexual sins from Leviticus 20:6–21 are shared from Harris (1990: 610–614), who suggests a comparison with Exodus 21:17; 22:19 and Deuteronomy 22:30; 27:20). Harris suggests that Leviticus 20:7–8 is a call to consecration and human responsibility—‘Keep my decrees’—and divine grace—‘I am the LORD, who makes you holy.’ He refers to the exhortations on holiness

(20:22–27) in this chapter as noteworthy in the midst of an immoral age and in an era of false religion, where the demands of Israel’s God stood out in bright light. This was applicable in New Testament times and is very applicable to our modern age: ‘Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonourable, he will be a vessel for honourable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart’ (2 Timothy 2:21–22).

In his discussion of Leviticus 20:22-23, Harris (1990:610–614) states that to dwell securely in the Promised Land, it was necessary for the Israelites to shun ‘the customs of the nations’ (verse 23). The word for ‘customs’ is literally ‘statutes’ (*ḥuqqōt*). He comments that the morals and worship of the surrounding nations were low. Therefore, the Lord required Israel to be separated and different from the nations. He had cast out the Canaanites because they did all ‘these things’, i.e., the incest, perversions, and immoralities referred to in the previous chapters. Israel was to be holy because the Lord is holy (verse 26).

Here I wish to reference Leviticus 20:7–8: ‘Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. Keep my statutes and do them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you.’ The fact of the Lord’s work of sanctification in the life of His people is so necessary because the fleshly nature needs constant work in being kept close to God.

### **3.2.2 1 Corinthians 5:1–8**

This passage indicates a very important imperative for churches in that they should not be tolerant of sexual sin in their ranks. The elders of a church have to monitor the members for any signs of sexual misconduct and to deal with them to turn away from that sin and not act like leaven or yeast which could contaminate the whole church; thus the stumbling block issue is raised here.

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father’s wife. 2 And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to

mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Hays (1997:80–92) in discussing ‘drive out the wicked person from among you’, states that the first problem that Paul highlights is the case of a man in the Corinthian church who is living in a sexual relationship with ‘his father’s wife’—not his own mother but a subsequent wife of his father. He refers to the doubt about the knowledge of whether the father had died or divorced this second wife, though the Corinthians must have known the particulars of the matter. Hays refers to the unity of the confirmation of other commentators that the woman must have been an unbeliever otherwise she too would have been subject to the disciplinary action that Paul orders in verses 2–5 and 11–13. Paul is clearly horrified by this relationship, labelling it *porneia* (sexual misconduct) ‘of a kind that is not found even among the Gentiles’ (5:1). Hays states that not only is the offending church member failing to live up to the standard of holiness to which Christ’s people are called; he is doing something that ‘even Gentiles’ would find reprehensible. He also cites this passage as giving credence to Paul’s claim that Gentiles would find such incestuous alliances objectionable. He cites the Scriptural prohibition of such relationships: ‘Cursed be anyone who lies with his father’s wife’ (Deuteronomy 27:20; cf. Leviticus 18:8; 20:11) showing that this behaviour of the incestuous man is a direct violation of God’s covenant norms for Israel.

The importance of church monitoring and intervening in the situation is well illustrated in this passage. Hays (1997:80–92) states that to him the most startling aspect of Paul’s response is that he does not merely condemn the perpetrator of illicit relationship, but instead, he scolds the community as a whole for their complicity in the matter:

And you [plural] are arrogant [“puffed up,” the same word that we have already encountered in 4:6, 18]! Should you not rather have mourned, so that he who has done this would have been removed from among you?...Your boasting is not a good thing” (5:2, 6a).

Hays (1997:80–92) explains the ramifications of this omission to deal with the problem adequately: Paul insists that the body of Christ has corporate moral responsibility for the conduct of its members. He states that the conduct of the individual members (even private conduct between ‘consenting adults’) affects the life of the whole community. Hays (80-92) refers to the later reference (12:26) to the whole body being affected by its members: by using the image of the ‘body of Christ’: “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.”

When Paul uses leaven as an illustration of corrupting influence (1 Corinthians 5:6b–7) Hays (1997:80-92) remarks that the image provides an explanation for Paul’s directive of expulsion: Allowing the offender to remain in the church will contaminate the whole community, which is conceived as a single lump of dough. He states that when Paul says to clean out the old leaven, he is not telling the individuals at Corinth to clean up their individual lives but rather to purify the community by expelling the offender. Hays refers to verse 5 as a puzzling passage: ‘hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit [literally, “the spirit”] might be saved in the day of the Lord.’ He sees this instruction as a vivid metaphor for the effect of expulsion from the church (cf. 1 Timothy 1:20). He states (80–92) that the closest analogy from Paul showing Satan as destroyer is 2 Thessalonians 2:9–10 which speaks of the powerful working of Satan to deceive ‘those who are being destroyed’ (again, cf. 1 Corinthians. 1:18).

Again Hays (1997:80–92) returns to the necessity of community discipline and purity in referencing verses 6–8, where he states that Paul returns the focus to the community’s spiritual state. Rather than their boasting (cf. 1 Corinthians 4:7), they should recognise where they really stand in the unfolding story of God’s redemptive action—being liberated from captivity through the death of Jesus. They should therefore act like Israel on the night of Passover: clean out the old leaven and gather together for the feast that celebrates their deliverance. Hays mentions the possibility, that Paul here is foreshadowing the discussion of the Lord’s Supper that follows later in the letter (11:17–34), particularly since that passage also deals with the theme of judgment in the community (11:27–32).

1 Corinthians 5:9–13 refers to the attitude the church should take to sexual immorality within the church as opposed to that of sexual offenders outside of the church.

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

Hays (1997:80–92) states that Paul is concerned that the church must truly be a counterculture, rather than becoming indistinguishable from the world around it. He therefore instructs the Corinthian church ‘not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister’ if that person brings discredit to the ‘family’ name through immoral living. They are to ‘not even eat with such a one’ (verse 11), for table fellowship with nominal Christians living immoral lives would seriously compromise the church’s reputation as God’s holy people. Paul does not object to eating with sinners out in the world, but is more concerned about the discipline and symbolic integrity of the church as an alternative society in a world of misconduct and idolatry.

God will judge the outsiders; the responsibility of the church is to exercise discipline over its own members (verses 12–13a), says Hays (80–92).

The list of sins requiring exclusion from the church's fellowship in 5:11 starts with sexually immorality. Hays (:80–92) suggests that that this is because of the immediate problem in Corinth. He refers to the link in Deuteronomy to promiscuity and adultery (22:21–22, 30) stating that if Paul is implicitly following the outline of these Deuteronomic exclusion texts, this is another reason for listing sexual immorality as the first vice for exclusion from the community of believers. Sinful behaviour of this sort cannot be allowed to corrupt God's elect covenant community.

Again I would refer to this passage to encourage the church to understand the severity of the problem of sexual immorality and that God will not tolerate it and would not have the church tolerate it either.

Another major problem in the world today is not acknowledging sin as being a true obstacle between ourselves and God (Romans 3:23) and that we need to accept God's way of reconciliation through the redemption offered by Jesus through His death on the cross to receive eternal life because of His love for us (John 3:16). But we can only be made righteous through Jesus' propitiation for our sins—His substitutionary death on the cross for us. The wages of sin is death and eternal separation from God and an eternity in hell as Scriptures state clearly (Romans 6:23). There are many people who do not fear hell, believing that they will be spared if they do good works (Ephesians 2:12—we are saved by God's grace only) or just because of God's love and not considering His holiness and therefore not accepting sinners into heaven—Jesus, God's perfect Son is the only access to the Father (John 14:6). Jesus Himself said 'And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell' (Matthew 10:28).

This is fundamentally important to consider in terms of sexual offenders and the possibility of salvation or no salvation. If we consider the Old Testament penalties for sexual immorality, it is not surprising to see that the New Testament has some serious warnings to sexual offenders and, again, there is a serious warning to

nominal Christians or born-again believers who are blatantly living together before marriage, for example in 1 Corinthians 6:9–20.

### **3.2.3 1 Corinthians 6:9-20**

Hays (1997:80-92) cites Paul's forceful argument in 6:9–20 where he addresses the church about sexual conduct. Apparently many Corinthian men were going to prostitutes and contending that such conduct was harmless. Prostitution was at that time not only legal, it was a widely accepted social convention. According to Talbert (2002:48) 'The sexual latitude allowed to men by Greek public opinion was virtually unrestricted. Sexual relations of males with both boys and harlots were generally tolerated.' The Corinthian men who frequented prostitutes were therefore merely insisting on their right to continue participating in a pleasurable activity that was normal within their own culture.

In reflecting on the fact that the Corinthian sophoi, seeing the body as transient and trivial, believed that it makes no difference what we do with our bodies as these were only external physical matters which were of no lasting significance, says Hays (1997:80–92). Their slogans included: 'If we are hungry, we should eat; if we are desirous of sexual gratification, we should seek it.' Paul's responses to the Corinthian slogan: 'I am free to do anything,' includes a clever rebuttal: 'not all things are beneficial (sympherei)'. Even apart from any specifically Christian reasons, Paul suggests, the extreme Corinthian position is simply bad philosophy: the wise person will not act in self-indulgent ways but will seek to act in accordance with an enlightened understanding of what is good. Paul then restates their slogan and offers a second rejoinder: 'I will not be dominated by anything.' Hays (80–92) comments on the fact that the wise person will not surrender control to anything or anyone. He makes a statement that can be related to the addiction to pornography of our current generation:

The danger is particularly great that the person seeking to exercise freedom through promiscuous sexual activity will end up as a slave to passion. The verb translated "dominated" here is the same one that appears in 7:4, where husband and wife are said to "have authority" over one another's bodies: by using this term Paul may be

suggesting subtly that the “wise” Corinthians who go to prostitutes are in effect surrendering control over themselves to the prostitutes.

Hays (1997:80–92) states that Paul’s strongest counter-argument concerns the Corinthians’ slogan about ‘food for the stomach’. He comments that the Corinthians themselves must have been using this argument about food as an analogy to justify their sexual freedom. Thus Paul’s response ignores the issue of food (an issue that he will treat later in response to their specific questions) and he focuses on the problem of fornication. Here he refers to Christian confession. The body belongs to the Lord Jesus, and God has confirmed His concern for the body by raising the Lord Jesus; this act of power declares God’s ultimate promise to raise us also (cf. Romans 8:11 and 1 Corinthians 15 in its entirety). No one who understands the fundamental content of the *kērygma* can suppose that our bodies are irrelevant. The gospel of Jesus Christ proclaims that we are to be redeemed body, soul, and spirit (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24; Romans 8:23). Salvation can never be understood as escape from the physical world or as the flight of the soul to heaven. Rather, the resurrection of the body is an integral element of the Christian story. Therefore what we do with our bodies in the present time is a matter of urgent concern.

Hays (1997:80–92) then states that God’s raising of Jesus validates the physical body, and thus Paul begins (6:15–17) to explore the implications of his statement that ‘the body is for the Lord’—our bodies belong to the Lord Jesus. Those who are in Christ have been united with Him in a relationship of intimate union (‘one spirit with him’, verse 17) and that this is an analogy to—but even deeper than—sexual union. (He refers to the fact that Paul describes union with Christ in verse 17 with the same verb that he had used in verse 16 to describe union with a prostitute). This means that our physical bodies no longer belong to us; they belong instead to Christ, in a manner analogous to the belonging of the bodies of husband and wife to one another (cf. 7:4; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22–33). Hays says, therefore that the man who has sexual intercourse with a prostitute is therefore is not only committing an act of infidelity to Christ but also taking something that belongs to Christ (his own body) and embarking on an unholy union. Contemplating this ‘blasphemous prospect’ Hays states (1997:80–92), makes Paul asks rhetorically,

‘Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?’ ‘Never!’ is his response.

This intense argument which deeply reflects the relationship beyond the man and women to relationship with God Himself, is a vital reminder for the church to teach teens and parents—we are dealing directly with God in our behaviour, and especially in sexual relationships. Hays (1997:80–92) states that the whole argument presupposes that sexual intercourse must be understood as a mysterious but real and enduring union between man and woman—and not just a transient act. Supporting this claim, Paul cites Genesis 2:24: ‘The two shall be one flesh.’ I quote Hays (80–92):

The union of a member of the church with a prostitute is disastrous for the Christian community precisely because it creates a real bonding with her; therefore it creates an unholy bond between the Lord’s members and the sinful world. The result is both defilement and confusion. In light of this explanation, Paul concludes with an emphatic imperative: “Flee fornication!”

Hays (1997:80–92) states that Paul clearly teaches that the fornicator not only defiles and damages the church community by linking Christ with a prostitute (verses 15–17) but also sins against his own body. This is extremely serious as the individual body of the Christian is ‘a temple of the Holy Spirit within you’, a place where God’s Spirit resides (verse 19; cf. Romans 8:11). Just as the church should be kept holy through exercising community discipline, so the individual body should be kept as a disciplined holy vessel, fit for the indwelling Spirit. He therefore says, in effect, ‘Because the Holy Spirit already dwells in you, you should keep your body from fornication.’

Referring to the direct link to our salvation and belonging to Christ when we become born-again believers, Hays refers to this reminder: ‘Do you not know ... that you are not your own?’ (1 Corinthians 6:19). Jesus death on the cross has paid the terrible price to ransom us from bondage to the powers of sin and death; consequently, we now belong to Him and not to ourselves, for ‘you were bought with a price’ (verse 20a). Hays state that the key idea for Paul’s argument at the end of chapter 6 is

actually the affirmation that we belong to God and not to ourselves (cf. Romans 14:7–9). And thus follows the closing exhortation: ‘Therefore glorify God in your body.’ Hays (1997:80–92) makes the profound statement which I believe should be heard by all perpetrators of sexual crime and especially involving children:

That is Paul’s climactic argument against fornication with prostitutes: our bodies, which belong to God, should be used in ways that bring glory to God, not disrepute. It is by no means a question of individual freedom, as the Corinthian slogan asserted. The distance between the Corinthian sophoi and Paul may be measured precisely by the distance between 6:12 and 6:20. They say “I am free to do anything”; Paul says “Glorify God in your body.” Their argument focuses on the rights and freedoms of the individual; Paul’s focuses on the devotion and service owed to God. Paul does not call upon the church to expel the men who have been visiting prostitutes. Instead, he provides an alternative theological vision and calls upon them to cease this behaviour.

Hays (1997:80–92) concludes that 1 Corinthians 5:1–6:11 summons the whole church to take responsibility for moral discipline in the community, and 6:12–20 summons individuals to moral humility before the Lordship of Christ. He states that with that recognition, they will be forced to abandon their private immoral pursuits and return into the discipline and nurture of the Christian community. He reminds us therefore that we cannot just do anything we like as moral “free agents”. We are bound to a relationship of obedient faithfulness to Christ and His standards.

Another profound observation by Hays (1997:80–92) is that Paul’s argument against extramarital sex in 1 Corinthians 6:12–20 never mentions infidelity to a spouse. Perhaps they were unmarried, but the major issue being addressed was that Paul regarded sexual promiscuity not primarily as an offense against any human relationship but, most fundamentally, as a sin against God. The union with a prostitute actually violates a believer’s prior bond with Christ. As people who belong to the Lord, our moral decisions should be shaped by the desire to glorify God in our bodies.

### 3.2.4 1 Corinthians 7

In teaching the fundamental principles of 1 Corinthians 7, I will only mention Scriptures which should be considered in terms of the sexual purity we are wishing to teach our children and for their parents to teach them, though I believe that the entire chapter should be taught to youth.

To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion (1 Corinthians 7:8–9).

Conzelmann (1975:94–126) argues that the principles of verses 1–7 applied to members of the community—single people (he states it is good to remain thus) and widows in verses 8 and 9. If there is a lack of sexual control it is better to marry (κρείττον, ‘it is better’) for example εἰ δὲ, if they do not have the gift of ἐγκράτεια, ‘continence’ to marry.

These exegeted passages are still focusing on God’s anger at sexual immorality and punishment and will still reflect this to a certain extent in Malachi 2, but thereafter, it is necessary to refocus on the positive aspects of the teaching on sexual purity creation of God’s creation of sexual intercourse, love and procreation in its context of marriage.

I have included Scriptures from Malachi 2 as I believe that children and parents need to know that God hates divorce, and that unfaithful parents, especially in terms of ‘violence’ (whether it is physical or verbal abuse) damage the children (whom God wants as godly offspring). If there is adultery it totally upsets a child’s understanding of faithfulness and he cannot fully understand the covenantal promises his parents made before God to each other and to God Himself. The ramifications in terms of later life choice of spouse, length of marriage, attitude to sexual relations, security, honour shown towards spouse and family are all affected.

### 3.2.5 Malachi 2:10-16

You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favour from your hand. But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence," says the LORD of hosts. "So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."

Alden (1986:717–718) comments concerning Malachi 2:13 that the people's sorrow, was for the wrong reason; they should have been bemoaning their sins rather than their lack of divine acceptance and consequent blessing. He discusses Malachi's rhetorical questions which he proceeded to answer himself (verse 14). He suggests that the reference to 'wife of your youth' in this verse suggests that the men were divorcing their aging wives in favour of younger women.

Verse 15 is the most difficult verse in the book as far as Alden is concerned (1986:717–718). In effect he says, God made monogamous marriage and intends unions to last. Apparently the Israelites were marrying foreign women and also divorcing their Israelite wives in the process. So they were actually guilty of two sins—divorce and intermarriage with foreigners. Alden states that in Malachi 2:16 God clearly makes His heart known on the matter of divorce: The man is referred to covering his garment with violence and being faithless to his wife by divorcing her. Alden states that many today would criticise Malachi for having a rigid view of marriage and divorce. But the covenant made between a man and a woman in the presence of a priest must be taken with utmost seriousness. 'What God has joined together, let man not separate' was Jesus' way of saying it (Matthew 19:6; Mark

10:9) Alden comments (717–718). He reminds the reader that not even the man who is a part of that union has permission to make such a separation.

Achtemeier (1986:181–183) mentions that verses 13–16 refer to the fact that some men have broken their marriage covenants by divorcing their wives of many years. He states that different covenants are addressed: verses 10–12 are a disputation and 13–16, a mixture of a disputation and prophetic torah nevertheless held together. He refers to the word ‘faithless’ (in verses 10, 11, 14, 15, 16) as the bond concentrating on covenant violations. His conclusion is that the wives (verses 13–16) have been divorced in order that the husbands may marry non-Israelite women. Achtemeier (181–183) refers to the fact that polygamy had always been lawful in Israel’s history, but that monogamy was the ideal in post-exilic times and was the actual condition in most families (cf. Genesis 2:18–25; Proverbs 5:18–20; 31:10–31).

Achtemeier (1986:181–183) explains that verse 10 refers to the Lord’s creation of Israel and the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and their covenant ceremony at Mount Sinai where God elected Israel as His own people with Him as their Father. In Malachi 2:6 the fatherhood of God was defined in terms of authority, and in verse 10 in terms of God’s creation of His people. Achtemeier (181–183) states that it is against the backdrop of Israel’s special role in the world, as instrument of God’s kingship, that Malachi views the seriousness of her sin (cf. Amos 3:2, and see the comment on Malachi 1:6–2:9). Such a nation, chosen for such a special purpose, should surely be expected to be faithful to the God of their covenant! He refers to their marriage to foreigners and resultant worship of the gods of their wives together or in place of their worship of the Lord of Hosts (cf. Ezra 9–10; Nehemiah 13:23–27). Achtemeier (181–183) refers to ‘abomination’, (hateful to God) as an idolatry which profanes the whole body of the people, which is termed God’s ‘sanctuary’ in verse 11. The punishment for such idolaters is therefore announced in verse 12: They will be excommunicated from the community. He places this judgement in a court case situation—‘to witness’ (RSV).

In the instructions given concerning marriage and divorce (verses 13–16), Achtemeier (1986:181–183) comments that they give one of the best understandings of the marital relation to be found in the Old Testament—an understanding affirming

the view of both Genesis 2:18-25 and of the New Testament (cf. Mark 10:1–12; Ephesians 5:21–33).

This fundamental view of marriage should be overtly taught to children, youth and parents and affirmed in sermons in church. To be taught in a refreshing, positive way about the glorious institution of a God-honouring marriage is a good approach. Subjects such as human rights would have great effect in motivating attitude change if they were presented as showing the positives (what God intended for adults and children) instead of the negatives (harsh reality). This would not deny presenting the indignities of human degradation (such as prostitution, abortion and child trafficking) but would perhaps first present the ideal as God would have it. This includes dignity and protection of women as beautiful members of society, who should be presented as virgins for marriage, pro-life, the wonderful gift of children to parents and the necessity to give them special protection, and nurture.

Marriage, in this passage, states Achtemeier (1986:181–183), is not just a private or civil or secular matter, but a covenant ordained and protected by God. Thus, if violated, the relationship with God is affected. He refers to verse 13, stating that the Judeans' worship and pleas for help are unacceptable to God. This, he says, brings into question the prayers and petitions of millions of churchgoers today.

Achtemeier (1986:181–183) raises the vital importance of the marriage relationship. He mentions relationship qualities in several verses: companionship (verse 14), mutual helpfulness (Genesis 2:18), mutual service (Ephesians 5:21), and the establishment of a family where parents pass on to children true faith and trust in God (verse 15). He confirms that Israelites married very early, before the age of twenty, hence verse 14 mentioning 'the wife of your youth'. He states that it is no wonder this act of leaving the wife is called 'violence' (verse 16), for it violently injures the well-being, security and dreams of all involved. The reference to the 'garment' is to the man's symbolic act of spreading his garment over the woman as a sign of his choice of her (cf. Ezekiel 16:8 and Ruth 3:9).

Achtemeier (1986:181–183) comments that Malachi clearly understands the desolation that accompanies the breakup of a family. He mentions the terrible act of the men abandoning their wives for other women—even more shocking when one

considers them having built homes, raised children and having faced life's problems together. He makes special mention of the fact that Malachi is sure of God's attitude: He hates divorce and it is something He never gets over, according to the Bible (yet a fact seldom considered by divorcing persons). He mentions likely wrong questions asked by the person considering divorce: 'Can I make it on my own?' 'Will it be better for the children?' 'Will I be happier?' rather than, 'How does God feel about the dissolution of this marriage?' Achtemeier (181–183) states that in this prophetic torah, as the 'messenger of the Lord of Hosts' (2:7), the prophet Malachi gives the answer.

In considering the biblical teachings in Malachi 2, I believe that the principles are not too complex even for a small child to understand.

### **3.3 Endorsement for teaching against sexual immorality**

Acts 15:20a refers to writing to Gentiles who have turned to God to warn them, amongst other things, to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality....'—thus the inclusion of the warnings given concerning sexual immorality.

### **3.4 Teaching positive values, especially in terms of sexual purity**

Even though it is important to list the sins of sexual immorality, God's hate thereof and His punishment of offenders, because of its lack of exposure to parents and children, I believe that the subject of sexual purity taught from a positive perspective would have better effect. The fear of consequences for breaking rules is not going to give the joy in living an abundant life as Jesus would have us live. In fact, it is likely to have a detrimental effect on both parents and children, and some might even leave church as a result. Yet carefully handled (probably after the positive teaching—see the suggested scriptures below), it is necessary to understand that God is loving, yet holy and we need to understand real, healthy, God-honouring love.

#### **3.4.1 List of scriptures concerning healthy love and sexual purity**

- Genesis 1 and 2. Men and women are meant to leave their parents, cleave to each other as husband and wife, and to be fruitful and multiply. This is the

starting point of marital favour with God. It is about the love of God for relationship within family.

- Deuteronomy 6 and Proverbs 22. God's desire for parents to bring up children to be brought up in His ways.
- Hebrews 13:4. A reminder to parents and children that sexual relations are good and God-honouring for their parents – expressing mutual love and God's manner for healthy procreation, affirming the importance of holiness: 'Let marriage be held in honour among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.'
- Song of Solomon—especially Chapter 1. The fact that the Song of Solomon is devoted to love between a man and a woman and the magnificence of the analogy of Christ the bridegroom and the church, the bride, is affirmation of the value of the physical love and devotion God has created within man and woman for each other.
- Song of Solomon 8:4. Encourages girls to wait for the right time for healthy love.
- 1 Corinthians 13. Clearly shows that love is patient, kind and not selfish or forceful, which is a major difference between love and a lustful self-gratification.
- James 4:7. In terms of sexual temptation, God gives a promise for victory: 'Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.'
- Colossians 3:5 affirms that it is possible to avoid submitting to temptation, 'Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.'
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 is also a promise from God: 'No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.'
- 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 helps us understand that our bodies are not our own as Christians—we are bought with a price, Jesus' shed blood on the cross, and

thus we need to honour God with our bodies as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.

- Hebrews 4:16 is especially for those parents, youth and children who have slipped up in life and need to understand that the Lord is willing to forgive and restore: 'Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need'.
- Proverbs 4:23 contains a positive command, 'Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life'.
- 2 Corinthians 6:14 warns us not to be yoked with unbelievers because of the conflict in values-especially righteousness versus lawlessness.
- Philippians 4:8. We are reminded to think thoughts that are positive, praiseworthy and excellent. If our thoughts are directed to wholesome subjects our whole life will be affected accordingly.
- Ephesians 5:3. We should also watch our conversation with friends—not even name incidences of sexual immorality and impurity 'as is proper among the saints' as this is not edifying.
- 1 Timothy 4:12. 'Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.'
- 1 Timothy 5:1–2. 'Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.' This reminds us to deal gently, compassionately and in a restorative way with others and to remind them to do the same.

## **4. The church must respond strategically to children in crisis in South Africa**

### **4.1 Introduction**

True devotion to (or worship of) Yahweh results in and is expressed through actions to help the poor and needy. This underlying portrayal of true spirituality, portrayed in the Old Testament and clearly a major part of the mission of Jesus to usher in the kingdom of God, and developed in the rest of the New Testament, is key to the

church the theme of the imperative covered in the next section. It is vital for the church is to take God's Gospel and practical help outside of the church to the hurting community. All the wonderful doctrine and all the learning and worship and fellowship within the church blesses those within its walls, but what about all the people, including children, who are without the church and are heading for a Christ-less eternity without the knowledge of the Gospel?

The gospel message is also not sufficient when the people to whom it is being addressed are hungry or cold and hurt. They need food and their wounds need healing. There is therefore the need to supply practical help to hurting children in the community (for example, those neglected, the abused and their parents, and orphans and their carers). This would involve offering counselling help and practical help to those suffering from the effects of scourges such as alcohol abuse – one of the root causes of abuse and neglect. Strategic ways in which the church can be instrumental in helping the hurting children in the community are detailed in Chapter 5.

The Lord gives much direction in His Word to the body of believers to be instruments in His hands, to carry out His work and especially minister to the poor, the alien, the widow and the orphan.

The following Scriptures give clear imperatives to serve in the community and can address children in crisis as well as adults.

## **4.2 Fight injustice**

We are asked to fight against injustice. 'Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy' (Proverbs 31:8–9).

'Thus says the LORD: "Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place"' (Jeremiah 22:3).

From Isaiah 58:6–8 we are asked to fight for human rights and dignity. ‘Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?’

This is what God clearly wants, and very seldom do church members get overly involved with politics or in fighting oppression. Much could be achieved if more Christians were in positions of political and public influence.

God promises to bless us if we try to counteract injustice, as the Scriptures continue to indicate from Isaiah 58: 8–12

Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

The reference to the foundations of many generations is crucial as it indicates breaking cycles of perpetuated injustice and resulting blessing on children.

For Isaiah 58:8 Watts (1998:275–276) refers to the expectations of God (Isaiah 49:6) the people needed to produce what James would later call ‘true religion and undefiled’ (James 1:27). Watts states that this applied to the local people—local Judeans around Jerusalem, as well as to the Persian emperor, Artaxerxes. In order

for him to fulfil the promise made to his grandfather (49:6), he must intervene in Judah to alleviate the oppressive and impoverishing conditions. In order for Artaxerxes to gain the *צדקה* 'legitimacy', and God's protection, Watts (275–276) states that he must act to correct these things and then Yahweh's glory (*כבוד*) would be his guard (reminiscent of the cloud which accompanied and protected Israel in the wilderness: Exodus 13:21–22 et passim, especially 16:10).

Watts (1998:275–276) comments concerning verse 9—when actions on such social issues demonstrate true worship as Yahweh wants it, then you may call and Yahweh will answer. The implications are that we cannot expect God to help us when we are not willing to help in places of need. Watts, in describing the order of actions says that first, do what is known to be God's will and what one is able to do. Then one can pray to God with the assurance of being heard and answered (cf. Matthew 5:23–24). Watts continues to elaborate on the issue of God's response to our prayers. He states that it is also conditional on us removing things from our lives that are displeasing to Him. These include a yoke (bondage which is displeasing to him). This applies to all spheres—economic, political, or social. Watts (275–276) states that God's people were and are intended to promote freedom. He comments that he believes that the pointing finger may refer to spying or accusations passed in a pressurising way, which in itself induces fear. Watts (275–276) suggests that the motive could have been to gain favour from an official or a neighbouring political leader. He comments that it could simply have referred to accusation, discrimination, gossip, or 'character assassination' (cf. the frequent New Testament references to accusations, false or true). The other element which needed to be removed was *דבר-און* 'speaking trouble.'—stirring up trouble, which was a constant problem for Nehemiah from neighbouring authorities, something intolerable in his own community.

In verse 10, Watts (1998:275–276) refers to the recurrent theme of verses 7–8. He believes that the concluding words, 'your light will rise', apply to the Persian emperor. This is a direct challenge for him too to help the hungry and afflicted. He points out that it is rare to find a political leader who recognises that the ultimate measure of a leader's greatness lies in the extent to which he extends himself to help the very

needy of his people. Thus he says that ultimately, to satisfy the afflicted is more important than pleasing the powerful and rich.

Watts (1998:275–276) states that verse 11 focuses on God’s concern for the poor and afflicted—caring about them and supporting those who do His will in this regard. For Artaxerxes, this meant guidance, power and sustenance and for Judah, it meant prosperity (like a watered garden, or a permanent spring of water).

In verse 12 Watts (1998:275-276) comments that Artaxerxes’ had to fulfil the assignments first given to Cyrus (44:26; 45:13) and to Darius, his grandfather (49:8b-9a). He says that this will come about when he has tried to meet these social and economic needs. The work of Ezra and Nehemiah in part acknowledges the support of Artaxerxes—the rebuilding of the age-old ruins, including the walls in Jerusalem. He would be known as ‘Repairer of the Breach’ in Jerusalem’s walls, as well as ‘Restorer of paths’ in which to dwell. That is, urban development in Jerusalem and in the villages of Judah will be attributed to him (Ezra 4:7–24; 7:1–28, and Nehemiah 2:1–9).

Isaiah 61:1–4 represent a messianic prophecy concerning Jesus’ ministry on earth that He himself read it out from the scroll in the synagogue, as indicated in Luke 4:18–21 which reads ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’

### **4.3 The church is called to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, including continuing His mission (John 20:21–23; Acts 1:1–8).**

#### **4.3.1 Isaiah 61:1–4**

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus introduced and framed His mission in the language of Isaiah 61:1–4, which reads:

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a

beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified. They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

Grogan (1986:333–334) discusses verses 1-3 in this Messianic Book. He points to their description of a man anointed by the Spirit of God, especially for the task of preaching (verse 1; cf. 1 Kings 19:15–16)—one who proclaims glad tidings (cf. 40:9; 41:27; 52:7). The fact that he has an anointing from the Spirit of God provides a link with both the kingly and the servant prophecies of this book (11:1; 42:1). Grogan (333-334) states that both earlier pictures refer to a ministry through speech (11:4; 49:2). Thus he says, if he is both King and Servant, then those qualities within Jesus are evidenced from early on within the Book of Isaiah.

Grogan (1986:333-334) refers to those benefiting from the preacher's message—specially the poor, the broken-hearted (cf. Psalm 147:3), the captives, and the prisoners. He comments on the possibility of the poor being literal, but suggests that the word probably has overtones of religious or spiritual devotion, as well as poverty (e.g. Psalm 40:17; 72:12–14). The broken-hearted appear again as those who are in mourning or in grief. Grogan (333–334) suggests that they could be mourning for sin (cf. 57:15) or over Jerusalem in its damage and destruction—though this was itself punishment for sin (then the reference to comfort would apply well to chapter 40). He references the poor and the mourners in the Beatitudes of Jesus (Matthew 5:3–4). The captives and the prisoners, he says, are likely to be the Exiles (cf. 42:22; 49:9; 51:14). He observes that the overtones of a New Exodus are still present.

The first two lines of verse 2 are significant, states Grogan (1986:333–334). The term *gō'ēl* ('Redeemer') not in this passage, was used in the Old Testament Year of Jubilee—when slaves were set free and land was returned to its original owners. He remarks that this term was closely linked with the legislation providing for the kinsman-redeemer (Leviticus 25); and the same word was used of the avenger of blood (for example Numbers 35:12). He explains that the Hebrew word translated

'freedom' in verse 1 is *derôr*, a technical term for the Jubilee release in the Old Testament (cf. Leviticus 25:10, 13; 27:24; Jeremiah 34:8–10; Ezekiel 46:17). His conclusion is that God presents Himself here then both as the Saviour and as the Judge. The promised blessings in verse 3, expresses the same basic idea in different ways. Grogan (333-334) describes ashes as symbolic of deep sorrow; and the crown, oil, and garment all suggesting preparations for joyous festival.

Grogan (1986:333–334) refers to the 'oaks of righteousness' as alluding to Isaiah 60:21 but with the thought now individualised. He states that if Matthew 15:13 is based on this, then he believes it is an indictment on the attitude of the Pharisees who were too concerned about displaying their own righteousness and not the glory of the Lord.

As related to the current ministry of the church to impact the hurting with the good News of the Gospel, there are some deep life-changing considerations evident in this passage. One is for the Christian to see the role model of Jesus as King of Kings-God, yet having the humility of a servant. The tasks mentioned would clearly change the world if Christians made themselves available to carry them out in the community: sharing the Gospel message—especially the hope that the poor and prisoners and the broken-hearted can have in Jesus. Jesus said, in effect, when announcing that this messianic prophecy had been fulfilled through Himself (Luke 4:18–21), that He is the source of salvation. Testimonies of people throughout the ages of the joy received though sins forgiven and new life in Christ, is evidence of the truths reflected in this passage. The reference to judgment is also significant – offenders need to know that they will be accountable to God. Also the final comment made by Grogan (1986:333–334) concerning the display of the Pharisees' so-called righteousness, instead of giving glory to God, can point to religious pretence and lip-service of many church-goers, rather than real effective God-honouring ministry to the community outside of the church.

#### **4.3.2 Ephesians 2:10**

Another reason for the church to take the imperative of taking the healing to the hurting is given in Ephesians 2:10, 'For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in

them.’ Anders (1999:112–113) discusses this verse and comments that as we, His children, stand on display throughout eternity, we will be recognised as God’s workmanship (*poiema*). This workmanship according to Anders, is not just a result of effort or labour, but is also a result of artistic skill and craftsmanship. He points out that if we could earn salvation by our own good works, we would not be a work of God but a work of our own self-effort. We were created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God determined before even before birth. He explains that God has prepared a path of good works for Christians which he will bring about in them and through them while they walk by faith. He makes a point of saying that this does not mean that we do a good work for God but that God does a good work through us as we are faithful and obedient to him. It is God who is at work and in faith we obey His directives in that work for His glory (cf. 1:6,12,14).

#### **4.3.4 James 1:21-25**

In the Book of James we are told that we need to put actions to words:

Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing (James 1:21–25).

Burdick (1981:174–176) exegetes James 1:21 by stating that to receive the Word, one must ‘get rid of all moral filth’. He states that the Greek word translated ‘get rid of’ (*apothemenoi*) referred mainly to removing garments. He refers to Hebrews 12:1 which speaks of throwing off any excessive weight, such as unnecessary clothing, to make ourselves ready for the race of faith. This ‘moral filth’ needs to be stripped off like dirty clothes in preparation for ‘accept[ing] the word.’ To receive the truth there needs to be a humble and meek attitude by the recipient (Greek: *praytēti*). Burdick (:174–176) states that the Word is described as ‘planted in you’ and this suggests

that the readers were believers who already possessed the truth. The phrase ‘which can save you’ he says, simply describes the truth as saving truth. James is calling for a full thoughtful appropriation of the truth as the Christian grows in spiritual understanding.

Verse 22, asserts Burdick (1981:174–176), is about putting the Word into practice. It is not enough merely to ‘listen to the word’—just being hearers of the truth is insufficient. Burdick comments that in reality, the responsibility of those who hear is far greater than that of those who have never heard. He warns that if they do not combine doing with hearing, they put themselves in a vulnerable position. He states that the call to ‘do what it says’ lies at the centre of all that James teaches, summing up the message of the whole book: He states that not only is that summary statement that we should put into practice what you profess to believe, but that this verse (:22) may well be the key verse of James’s epistle.

In commenting about verse 23 Burdick (1981:174–176) expands on the illustration of a man who ‘looks at his face in a mirror’. The Greek verb *katanoēō* refers to careful observation which that man would do in carefully studying his face and becoming thoroughly familiar with its features. This, Burdick states, is paralleled by the person who listens to the Word, attentively—at length, so that he understands what he hears, knowing what God expects him to do. Thus, any failure to respond cannot be blamed on lack of understanding.

Continuing in verse 24 James further explains that upon going away the man ‘immediately forgets what he looks like’. Burdick comments that for him it is almost a case of when out of sight the subject is out of mind. Thus despite thoroughly scrutinising his face, he forgets what it was like. This seems ludicrous states Burdick (1981:174–176), but he is no less ludicrous as in the case of a believer who listens carefully to God’s truth and does not remember to put into practice what he has heard. To me this is a profound statement. Believers almost seem to have a type of soothing for their conscience and spiritual well-being by hearing sermons and perhaps justify postponing a thought to minister to someone in need and then forget about it because of the daily commitments from Monday to Saturday. Burdick comments that listening to truth should not be an end in itself any more than gazing

at one's face in a mirror is an end in itself. The purpose of listening to truth should be to act upon it. He states that theoretical knowledge of spiritual truth is never commended in Scripture, but is discouraged and condemned. In the Judeo Christian context, Burdick remarks (174–176), knowledge is inseparably tied to experience. He points to a believer gaining knowledge through experience—intended to affect subsequent experience.

Verse 25 expresses the result of obeying God's Word—listening and putting it into practice. 'He will be blessed in what he does.' Firstly, he 'looks intently' into God's truth (*paraklyptō*). Secondly 'he continues to do this'. He is the blessed man of Psalm 1 who meditates in God's law day and night. Third he does not forget 'what he has heard'. Fourthly, and most importantly, states Burdick (1981:174–176), he puts the truth into practice. He comments on James's use of the term "law" which he feels deserves special attention. He calls it 'the perfect law of freedom', not enforced by external compulsion, but which is freely accepted and fulfilled with glad devotion under the enablement of the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22–23; cf. James 2:8,12).

When a Christian considers his service for God, I wonder if the importance that God gives to widows and orphans in James 1:27 is really considered in any personal sense? 'Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.'

Dibelius and Greeven (1976:121–124) speak about 'unstained' (*ἄσπιλος*) as meaning: to keep the Jewish laws of ritual purity; in the mouth of a strict Jewish-Christian: to observe them precisely in dealings with Gentile-Christians and in the context of a Christianity one has already become free from the Jewish Law. In this case, it provides a valuable commentary on 'the perfect law of freedom' in verse 25. Dibelius and Greeven (:121–124) state that verse 27 is leading back to the fundamental idea of the section: Be doers of the word! This practical orientation of the verse (and of James in general) gives evidence for a Christianity which sees the confirmation of its faith in a daily life of brotherly love and moral purity—as Paul would say: in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and in particular by the simplest thing in the world: a life which is well-pleasing to God.

#### **4.3.5 Psalm 68:5–6**

With respect to God's concern for orphans and widows Psalm 68:5–6 shows God's heart for them to be incorporated into the fellowship and care of families: 'Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.'

Hossfeld and Zenger (2005:164) ask the question: Is the church willing to offer homes to the fatherless? They refer to the call to praise in verse 5 which develops a particular theology of the name and a theology of the poor. They state that the name given for God is YH/YHWH, recalling the beginnings of revelation, the manifestation of the name in Exodus 3, at the mountain of God, and God in the wilderness, where He appeared as a storm-god (Exodus 19). In discussing Psalm 68:6–7 Hossfeld and Zenger (164) mention some special features concerning the poor: God is Father and Advocate for the relatives who have no helper (cf. 68:4 and 27:10), especially the orphan and the widow. They speak about the connection between the older Wisdom tradition, which connects the Creator with fatherly care. In contrast to the Deuteronomistic trio of poor persons, the foreigner is absent here (cf. Ps 94:6; 146:9). Hossfeld and Zenger (164) mention the fact that it is unusual for there not to be a connection to a supportive family for the lonely, or singles or for those who lived alone. It is a comfort that God Himself brings people like that into a sheltering household. This group is mentioned alongside the poor (just is Psalm 25:16, a later, postexilic psalm). In addition, prisoners are classified with the poor as the objects of divine care (Psalm 69:34 and 79:11).

#### **4.3.6 Titus 2 and 3**

The Book of Titus encourages us in good works, referring to Jesus Himself 'who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works' (Titus 2:14). The reason for including this scripture is that we need to be zealous for God. This is a matter of attitude and does not come naturally. It is a result of having experienced God's love and being motivated by our love for Him and our gratitude for what He has done. If the works we do for God come from duty and no love or passion, God

knows and sees ulterior motives and the good works may be useless—‘Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labour in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain’ (Psalm 127:1).

The privilege of being God’s children is outlined with a resultant expectation of our response to God:

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people (Titus 3:4–8).

Hiebert (1981:444–447) elaborates on these scriptures, which motivate us to do good works as a natural outworking of gratitude for our salvation. He discusses the motive from our present salvation from Titus 3:4–7. He explains the use of the word ‘But’ which contrasts what we once were and are now (Romans 6:17–23; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; Ephesians 2:2–13; 5:7–12; Colossians 1:21, 22; 3:7–10). He affirms that marvellous salvation that we now know should motivate our dealings with the unsaved. He comments that this passage is a superb summary of the whole gospel, mentioning the manifestation (verse 4), the basis (verse 5a), the means (verses 5b, 6), and the results (verse 7) of our salvation.

With reference to the good works which should result from our salvation, Hiebert (1981:444–447) speaks about the necessary connection between doctrine and conduct (3:8b) stating that it is Paul’s definite intention that Titus, as his personal representative in Crete, continue insistently ‘to stress these things’. ‘These things’ apparently looks back to verses 4–7 and views those doctrinal truths in their varied aspects. Their trustworthy character demands that Titus “stress” them. The preacher should, according to Hiebert with insistent preaching aim at a definite result in the

lives of believers. “Those who have trusted in God” (a perfect active participle, standing emphatically at the end of the sentence) depicting their on-going relationship with Christ that their present relationship, obligates them to ‘be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good’. He comments that the gospel message of free forgiveness for sinners on the basis of faith alone, must find expression in a life characterised as taking a lead in the performance of excellent deeds. The practice of good works should be the logical outcome of a life lived with a continual comprehension of the grace of God.

Hiebert (1981:444–447) states that Paul’s summary evaluation of these instructions is that they are ‘excellent and profitable for everyone’. He considers the possibility that ‘These things’ may refer to his final demand that believers combine faith and practice, but states that it is more likely to refer to the true teachings that Titus must insist on in his work in Crete. By their very nature they are ‘excellent’, good, attractive, and praiseworthy. They are also ‘profitable for everyone’, having a beneficial impact on mankind—believer and unbeliever. His comments show that the Christian should extend acts of mercy to the believer and unbeliever. When one considers the orphans and the widows and the poor one has to wonder where their relatives are. This also makes one wonder what extended families are doing or not doing for ‘black sheep’ and vulnerable family members.

#### **4.3.7 1 Timothy 5:7–10**

God’s Word has strong indictments on families who do not care for their own flesh and blood: ‘But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever’ (1Timothy 5:8).

Earle (1981:377) in discussing 1 Timothy 5:7–8, refers to Timothy, who is to ‘give the people these instructions’. *Tauta parangelle* can have the stronger meaning, “command these things”, but perhaps the NIV is best. The purpose of the instruction is “that no one may be open to blame”—literally, ‘that they may be open to reproach’ (*anepilēmptoi*). When referring to 1 Timothy 5:8 Earle (377) states that Paul is speaking strongly on this matter of caring for the needy. He declares that if anyone does not ‘provide for’ (*pronoeō* literally ‘think of beforehand’, and so ‘take thought

for') his own (relatives) and especially those of his own family, 'he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever'. He cites White (EGT, 4:129) as saying,

The Christian who falls below the best heathen standard of family affection is the more blameworthy, since he has, what the heathen has not, the supreme example of love in Jesus Christ.

According to Scripture, a widow may receive help if she fulfils certain criteria: 'Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work' (1 Timothy 5:9–10). 'If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows' (1 Timothy 5:16). How must the church respond to family members in need, especially extended family, where children may be suffering from neglect? Our mandate is clear: Let us 'do the Kingdom' and help those in need.

#### **4.4 Witness of believers**

Despite a very negative reflection on the state of children world-wide and in South Africa, with the research clearly indicating neglect and abuse of children to the point of crisis, there is much hope from a Christian perspective, as the Bible and testimonies of children finding new hope in Christ Jesus as Saviour and helper attest. The witness of born-again believers, including my own, is that new life and joy in Christ, who loves us and cares about us, gives us incentive to serve Him and witness to unbelievers, both children and adults so that they can come to know and love the Lord too, to worship Him and to appreciate the potential He has placed within them for fulfilled lives.

The church has a mandate from Christ in John 20:21 'Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."'

Jesus wants those of us, who are privileged to have been set free from the bondage of sin, who daily experience the joy of His indwelling Holy Spirit, to reach out to

others with this gospel message, with His love, to help others, and to appreciate the gifts and talents He has given us. This is so that we can learn, inter alia, to produce viable, sustainable crops to break the dependence poverty mind-set and to minister to people in the bondage of sin and the rejection of Christ and His standards. The repercussions for the affected children, reaping the consequences of their parents' sin and being hurt by neglect and abuse, needs to be addressed by the church. Exodus 20:5–6 says, 'You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.'

Ministry and service by children was evident throughout the Bible and is evident now, if the church and parents and schools give them the opportunity to be transformers in their generation. Children often bring their peers to the Lord. It occurs in events like camps and friendship evangelism and there are many opportunities to get them fruitfully involved. Bush (2009:6) reminds us that in the USA, nearly 85% of people who make a decision for Christ, do so between the ages of 4 and 14. During the 20th Century, that age group was the single largest source of new believers for the American church. Children working in teams with adults can learn the meaning of going out to do God's work. Working alongside role models and mentors creates opportunities for them in turn to learn to evangelise.

#### **4.5 Comfort from the Holy Spirit**

The comfort of the Holy Spirit was evident from the earliest times in the lives of the early church believers, including the children, and He is unchanging. Acts 9:31 says, 'So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied. We have been blessed by the Lord's comfort – not just for ourselves, but to be able to comfort others.' 2 Corinthians 1:4 reminds us about the Holy Spirit's comfort in our lives: 'who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God'.

Children are so often the innocent victims of divorce. Some of the hurts which counsellors and godly Christian carers need to address include showing children the real, loving, Heavenly Father (Abba Father–daddy), who has unconditional love for them. In Christ, there is no condemnation (John 3:17). One can face the problem and know that nothing will separate the child from God’s love. One can admit the sadnesses caused and the feelings experienced, which include denial that the family is breaking up, as well as the feelings of guilt by the child who feels to blame. Christ has told us to cast our anxiety on Him because He cares for us, including children (1 Peter 5:7).

#### **4.6 Practical tasks**

Bunge (2007:229), provides a practical list of needs which could also be considered by the church (as well as by governments and NGO’s), as avenues in which to minister to the needy. She lists provision of safe drinking water, proper nutrition, adequate health care, an adequate standard of living, helping children to access education, helping to safeguard the natural environment for the sake of the children’s quality of life and spiritual growth. She appeals for us to be involved in the protection of children from abuse, neglect and physical punishment. She appeals for efforts to be made against HIV and for help for AIDS’ orphans, to strengthen foster care programmes, improve orphanages and to accelerate the process of adoption for children in need.

Bunge (2007:229), adds further tasks for the Church, which include preaching and teaching on the ‘the sacred task of parenting’, offering divorce prevention and care programmes, and providing theologically sound help resources. She speaks about giving a voice to children–honouring their questions and insights and says ‘listen and learn’ from the children, considering the importance of their journey of faith and spiritual maturation. She also stresses that parents and care-givers should be given ideas and resources for faith-building.

Richard Stearns (2009:185), in his award-winning book, *The Hole in the Gospel*, clearly illustrates the blessing of a church that meets the mandate in the following Scriptures: James 1:27 says, ‘Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself

unstained from the world.’ This implies personal caring—time and effort and sharing the love of Christ in word and deed. James 2:14–17 addresses the lack of effect of having the wonderful gospel message but not giving it to those who receive it appropriately.

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Stearns mentions the plight of hurting children—without food or water, some exploited by evil people who curse God in the process. He acknowledges all the broken people everywhere. But he says in testimony,

But I also know the power of the gospel—the gospel without a hole—that we are charged to carry. I have seen it with my own eyes. Small step of faith, and God has privileged me to glimpse the revolutionary power of the gospel in our world (278).

While working for World Vision, Stearns (2009:278) has seen the power of prayer of millions who pray and give what they are able, with many churches not just speaking about the gospel, but actually demonstrating it. He mentions having witnessed the faith of hundreds of anonymous ‘Mother Theresa’s’, who minister as Christ’s hands and feet in the dumps refugee camps and brothels. He says (278),

I have seen the impact of the kingdom of God—a mountain of mustard seeds—transforming people’s lives. I have seen the impossible. I have seen the hungry fed and people taught to fish and farm. I’ve watched wells being drilled and cisterns being built—the thirsty given water. I have met refugees who have been resettled, disaster victims who have been restored, and captives who have been released. I’ve seen widows comforted, orphans cared for, children freed from slavery and

abuse, schools built, clinics opened, babies vaccinated and loans lifting the poor out of poverty.

Stearns speaks about the best of these experiences, seeing 'the very gaze of Christ' staring back at him through the eyes of the poor, and the joy of seeing the lives and deeds of faithful Christian servants showing the love of Christ. The best for him is the evidence of changed lives through personal relationship with Christ as Saviour and Lord. Stearns challenges us to take up the vision—showing Christ's love in whatever ways we can. Even small ways can have great effect.

Let us extend ourselves to the hurting—the carers and especially the children!

I have addressed the need for the church to come alongside the hurting children, but also to address re-educating the church about the importance of children within the church and family—to prioritize their effective nurture, both spiritually and holistically. This involves spiritual parenting and extending into the community during the week as well as on Sundays. I have addressed the imperatives that I believe the Lord would have for us to restore to parents the importance of considering the Father-heart of God and those characteristics shown through Jesus Christ, and the importance of following His example as a role model for parents.

The importance of biblical teaching for families—from parents to children, is vital and in that regard I have expanded on content and application. Finally, the Lord would have us care for children and their families, and specially hurting, neglected and abused children, in a practical way; the church needs to 'Do the Kingdom', showing God's practical love as well as sharing the gospel message.

'May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!' (Psalm 72:4).

## **Chapter 5. Strategies for the church in response to the crisis, and their implementation**

### **1. Introduction**

Having considered the crisis of children globally and in South Africa and having concluded that neglect and abuse are major areas of concern, I question whether the church is addressing the problem in any way, especially with respect to the imperatives listed in Chapter 4.

As solution, in Chapter 5 I will mention the Scriptural basis, list some adapted strategies, many of which emanate from the Transform World Global Summit held in Bali, during November 2012, discuss examples from current practice, and finally list my own proposals.

It seems to me that children are not given the care and nurture they should receive, even in normal circumstances, not to mention those who live in dire economic or socially unacceptable circumstances of marginalization. I do not believe that the church is extending itself enough to help these children.

The parental role of modelling, especially in the priestly role the father should play in the home, is generally absent. Is the church responding, for example, by teaching about family and biblical family values, or extending itself to help other families that are dysfunctional? I do not believe so. The church must teach such values, such as sexual purity, at age-appropriate levels. This is a great need as a child can suffer life-long damage if exposed to promiscuous or other unhealthy sexual lifestyles.

The harnessing of believers to go out into the world and come alongside hurting children and families is a great need because the church is inclined to be introspective, to only extend care to children associated with the church and not to those outside the church who may desperately need help.

The link between the Scriptures (in Isaiah 58) and the strategies for the church is a starting point for an appeal for churches to intentionally seek opportunities to help local children in crisis. Each church needs to be informed of the needs of children in

crisis in its geographical area and to plan measures which address the need, by visiting the children, sponsoring education and basic food and health needs, and sending believers to teach skills. It should make representation at local government level to correct injustices, give protection to the children and break each specific yoke as the Scripture outlines in Isaiah 58:6–7:

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Once the strategies have been discussed, the remainder of the chapter will be devoted to possible methods of implementation, and models of good practice are described to encourage churches to engage with some of the ideas that are proving consistently successful in helping children in crisis to normalise and to become well adjusted members of society. I will include:

- Strategies in trauma support.
- Addressing children at risk, including the sexually exploited and those in dysfunctional families.
- Advice for the single parent.
- Helping the orphan.
- Giving community-based support.
- Helping adolescents.
- Utilising The Evergreen Counselling STOP model for traumatised children.
- The vital difference between a Christian and a non-Christian counsellor.

## **2. Acknowledging the need for salvation**

In addressing strategies for the healing and eradication of the problems that beset children, some suggestions have been made in various world congresses and various other arenas by world experts on children. These are worthy of mention, though, again, I am very conscious of the fact that so many preambles and

declarations are brilliant in structure, but it is the wickedness of man that is the real problem. Christ came to supernaturally redeem man, forgive him of his sins and redeem him from his deserved penalty of estrangement from God because of his rejection of Jesus, the Redeemer. This was God's way of propitiation through Jesus' death on the cross for us and His resurrection power to change our lives, rendering us blameless because of His forgiveness. Also, only Christ can change a heart through the work of the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and righteousness and judgement (John 16:8). Only He is able to make a heart truly repentant and become intimately aware of God's love and sacrifice, and to fill a heart with a godly regret for wrongdoing. He can change the heart of a perpetrator of abuse and neglect of children, give that person the strength to change his lifestyle, to carry out his good intentions to be removed from the yoke of an abusive lifestyle, and to help him rehabilitate and be restored. The victim of abuse can also be miraculously changed, comforted, rehabilitated and restored.

### **3. Strategies suggested for the church in response to the crisis**

In view of the global and South African crisis situation with many children, and the imperatives I have outlined for the church as I would see that God would have the church follow, I will discuss various strategies which can be applied by the church, then some which I would personally attempt to apply, harnessing a group of co-ministry workers—mentors in a Titus 2 mentorship group, the Apples of Gold South Africa Trust already involved in mentor training, and I will contact strategic organisations and leaders to inform them of the accessibility to the material from the Transform World Global Summit, with the specific intention of encouraging churches to hold Orphan Sundays to become more involved in helping orphans. Finally, I will post extra online material, where relevant, to students I tutor at the South African Theological Seminary in children, youth and Christian relationships courses. All of these strategies would be in dependence on God's enabling.

### **4. Transform World Global Summit**

Firstly, I wish to refer to the strategies suggested in some tracks of the Transform World Global Summit (TWGS) held in Bali in November 2012. Dr Luis Bush

introduced the Summit by giving the theme in a slogan: 'Revitalise the church to renew the culture', which is an excellent motivation for the body of believers to extend themselves to impact society. Bush and his team addressed seven challenges in each of seven spheres, namely, Church, Education, Family, Government, Media (and Technology), Business (and the Market Place), and Arts (and Health and Science). Challenges included: Family, Orphan, Poverty, Human Rights, Christ's Missional Challenge, Celebration Challenge (prayer, praise and worship) and Ideological Challenge (mainly concerning Islam).

The items which have specific relevance are the foundational motivation of Transform World Global Summit, which is rooted in what Bush (2012) calls 'a crisis in the culture with disintegration at the core due to a failure to respond to important moral challenges of the day' (2012).

I wish to transpose their vision to that of this thesis, narrowed down to hurting children and their carers, but using the same principles to motivate the church, and to strategise for maximum effect to reach the children in crisis. The Transform World Mission (2012) is:

Transform World Connections exist to serve community catalysts engaged in God's mission of transformation by catalysing and connecting them together in consultation with people and communicating resources to equip the body of Christ in motivating the whole church to bless the nations through prayer and collaborative action to see all nations restored and transformed as cultures increasingly reflect the value system of the Kingdom of God.

I would change one phrase here for this thesis mission: in context, 'to see all hurting children restored'.

The TWGS employs the teamwork model by Patrick Lencioni, which starts on a platform of trust, with open discussion, commitment, accountability and then attention to results. Applying these principles to this thesis could involve communicating the orphan and street children's needs to local leaders and orphan NGOs, such as Door of Hope (Cheryl Allen) and Give a Child a Family (Monica

Woodhouse), and building contacts with the local church. This involves building relationships and understanding the exact situation in the area (through an assessment study), then having various orphan/children Sundays where a type of mentor/shepherd/caring system is introduced. This could start with families praying for specific orphans or hurting children and becoming their 'virtual families'. This model, as it is implemented by Robert Botha of the James 1:27 Trust, is proving successful with a number of marginalised children who are now receiving tuition in certain subjects, and local teachers of skills are being paid by sponsoring companies to give the children classes, for example, in guitar and art. The Trust accesses resources for these purposes.

Attention to results would have to be given by a dedicated local church committee in liaison with the local orphanage or known carers of abused or hurting children. Bush (2012) lists the requirements for the Christian who serves in this way as being the willingness to give time, having an intimate relationship with God, a sense of justice and a vision for transformation as restoration.

Bush's next major consideration is for the unified body of Christ to be servant catalysts for these changes in culture to occur (2012). This requires engagement of participants, a committed minority with creative power to spark a challenge-response initiative. The way in which this can happen, says Bush, is in the local situation, to pray, identify people, select them, recruit them, associate with them (build relationship), enter mutual discipleship and take on the challenge together. With God's help, and engaging all generations, namely the older generations, the Gen-Y generation, the youth and the children (4–14'ers), it is possible to have a convinced minority as the servant hearted-effort starts to show positive results. This can then produce a convinced majority which leads to a response movement resulting in culture change.

I have seen that this strategy has been successful in many ways. The conference report-backs from initiatives from previous years have enumerated wonderful results. There is a move of God in Indonesia where families and factions of local people in conflict have reconciled, forgiven each other, and God has helped heal relationships and even physical damage to the land; contaminated water has become potable

again in Talasea, Papua New Guinea. Thousands of people have come to the Lord, militants have laid down arms and the peace has been restored to families and communities, including children who were fearful of their safety when playing outside, with resultant 24/7 open prayer venues and new churches being established. A video of Talasea, narrated by Walo Ani, was shown at the TWGS conference (2012).

In my own project with children, the Farming God's Way pilot programme at Camp Faraway (Noordhoek), where Ron Clarke facilitated the planting of a well-watered garden, local businesses provided seed and even the equipment to excavate and prepare the soil. This resulted in the one garden pilot project being extended to six well-watered gardens. This is an example of a potential culture change, especially as the children have been taking the produce to the local township. The big issue is to change the mindsets of the poor who need to learn to engage with self-sustainability projects without a 'hand-out' mentality. Only God can do that, so prayer for these people is paramount to success.

A local church could apply this, for example, by helping the orphans. This strategy was adopted by the Ideological Challenge group at the TWGS:

- Introduce people who are interested in the project.
- Discuss expected outcomes.
- Build consensus.
- Create a simple, 1-year, clear, achievable and measurable action plan.
- Pray for an action plan (includes personal prayer - asking the Lord what is needed. Repentance, humility, servant hearts, desire for transformation towards positive change and God's agenda are important elements, as is the need for orphans to gain a positive identity, namely that they are made in the image of God with great potential in Him).
- Select the priority.

In terms of estranged family or adult relatives of orphans or abused children, they can be invited by the church to therapy groups for small group rehabilitation discipleship. These support groups and therapists can eventually restore family

relationships and reunite family members. Small groups of possible foster parents could also be invited to small group discipleship and training groups, which are very worthwhile. A similar type of short-term group could be organised for single parents or for divorce recovery of parents or affected children.

For the carers of orphans and hurting children, the following strategies could be implemented:

1. Inform orphan carers about resources for children, for example, those available at [www.truthforkids.com](http://www.truthforkids.com), orphan-care resources, for example [www.orphancareresources.org](http://www.orphancareresources.org) and educational resources, for example [www.davidcook.org](http://www.davidcook.org). Media such as Transworld Radio, have 120 programmes for hurting children in the form of dramettes called Wisdom at the waters.
2. Orphan delegates from the TWGS suggested:
  - Engaging grandparents/ surrogate grandparents to speak blessing over the children.
  - Fathers apologising for the abandonment of children.
  - Utilising programmes for marginalised children such as the Association of Christian School International's School-in-a-bag programme.
  - Separate curricula for boys and girls at age seventeen, and gender-appropriate topics in life skills.

In terms of walking with the poor the strategies are mainly towards self-sustainability, self-governing and self-propagating projects, mainly funded through small loan enterprises. I have included this strategy because it can involve and benefit children.

A suggested strategy here is to gather like-minded people to

- recognise the need,
- clarify the purpose,
- choose a champion—a believer (a person of peace), to oversee the project,
- start a seed project,
- gain commitment from participants,
- have weekly training, and

- give ownership to the people.

In application to orphans, they could engage in art and their pictures could be bought by church members, with the added benefit of reminding the recipients of the need to pray for and support the children. Photographs are also a good reminder.

In terms of Christ's Missional Challenge the following strategy could be used to great effect:

- Evangelisation focus sustaining a proclamation strategy.
- Evaluation focus sustaining an identification strategy.
- Indigenisation focus sustaining a localisation strategy.
- Duration focus sustaining a continuation strategy.
- Maturation focus sustaining a preservation strategy.
- Multiplication focus sustaining a duplication strategy.
- Collaboration focus sustaining a co-operation strategy.
- Fruition focus sustaining a completion strategy.
- Intercession focus sustaining an impartation strategy.

I would apply this strategy to the church and its ministry to hurting children, carers and families and endeavour to meet Christ's missional challenge to bring people to the Lord and disciple them (Matthew 28:19). I would add the necessity of being honourable, meeting promises, and not destroying trust. The church needs to keep up the relationship as mentors and not just begin short-term acquaintances, with gestures of care which are almost excuses to appease conscience and not really from hearts wanting to go the distance with restoring the children and helping them towards that hope and future that God has promised (Jeremiah 29:11). The children need love desperately and this is what needs to be evidenced from the body of believers.

## **5. Strategies in trauma support**

Mottham (2007:143–157) campaigns for spiritual advocacy and support for those suffering from trauma. He is an expert (over twenty years' experience) in supporting

those suffering from medical trauma, which includes making decisions about medical ethics. Yet his principles for supporting anyone suffering from trauma, including children, are worthwhile strategies for consideration as a lay Christian ministry worker comes alongside a hurting child or children's carer. Mottram (143-157) outlines strategies he applies when visiting a traumatised person. This includes the following components: being physically present with the person, listening to them rather than giving advice, prayer and ways in which to build new hope. This includes, reading biblical promises, recollecting God's previous interventions in crisis, and expressing gratitude to Him for this—resulting in application to the new situation and a new trust in God to help towards a positive future.

1. **Presence:** Mottram (2007:144): states that in a crisis situation, what you say is not nearly as important as 'being there' and accompanying the person in the journey he has to make. Seeing the trauma over many years, he states in terms of pastoral visits where there is no personal physical presence, that little else in a daily schedule has true priority over being there for a frightened hurt person. He quotes the Scripture: 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God (2 Corinthians 1:3–4). He refers to another Scripture in terms of sitting with the traumatised person in the crucial time of the trauma as being Christ's ambassador to them (2 Corinthians 5:20a). 'Presence' is defined by faithfulness, Mottram comments (144). To be with them throughout their time of crisis requires faithfulness. To the hurting person it is a sign of God's love and grace when we commit to being available and present-willing to give them attention.
2. **Listening:** Spiritual leaders are used to telling people what to do—running cell groups or speaking much in the discipling process rather than listening. True listening is a discipline and takes time and effort to master. Often in a situation where a person pours out his heart, and where few words are said by the listener, the former profusely thanks the listener for all his help. Such people find a helper whom they learn to trust, and in speaking to them can

often come to a new level of understanding of their problem (Mottram 2007:147–148 citing Sweeten G et al: 1993:108–109). Sweeten lists the three components of listening effectively : identifying the feeling that you hear expressed; identifying the thought content that you hear expressed, and tentatively summarising or paraphrasing what you hear in your own words. In this way the communicator knows that the listener really understands the problem and understands his/her genuine concern for them.

3. **Prayer** is usually a welcomed means of support, though not always – sometimes it can cause a rift in relationship with the counsellee, especially if he is angry. The Christian visitor/counsellor who responds to the crisis should realise his need of guidance from God in the situation, asking Him to provide what is needed in the present situation and for future interventions. Mottram (2007:149) mentions that the Christian counsellor needs strength, faith and knowledge from the indwelling Holy Spirit. He states that God honours prayer from a person who comes from a position of weakness and from a humble and contrite heart. He says that one cannot just give ‘pat answers’ or formulas for knowing God’s will, but there is the promise that the Spirit will intercede in each situation for us in accordance with God’s will: ‘Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.’ (Romans 8:26–27). The types of prayers may also reframe negative thoughts about God to a new mind-set so that God can be acknowledged and trusted to work healing into the life of the person who is hurting. Repentance and forgiveness can also feature as the Lord leads, but there should be no manipulation from the counsellor.
4. **Strategies to birth new hope:** This is a vital component of the healing process. Mottram (2007:155) states that of all the spiritual resources, interventions and support mechanisms, this is one of the most important desired outcomes for the traumatised person. Together with the support roles of presence, listening, prayer and repentance/forgiveness, the needy person gradually receives a new sense of hope. He quotes a definition given by

Arnold (1982:51) from a Christian perspective: 'Looking outside of the self to other resources and promises that can be counted on.' Mottram (2007:155) states that hope becomes a part of our being when we trust that God's promises and purposes will prevail in the end. He refers to the fact that when we read in Scripture of God's mighty acts among His people, we have hope built in us. Also the testimonies of people whose lives have been changed by God give the present reality of His power. He refers to Proverbs 3:5 as a reality lived out by many who are experiencing God's Word as living and active in the present. 'Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths' Proverbs 3:5-6.

A very effective counselling resource that I have seen help the layman is The Billy Graham's Christian Worker's Handbook: a layman's guide for soul winning and personal counselling (1984). It contains a brief description of the issue facing the person (index is alphabetical), and a set of topical Scriptures which can have special significance as they are from God's Word and will not return empty: 'so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it' (Isaiah 55:11).

Another strategy towards having a new hope, suggested by Mottram (2007:156), is to remind the hurting person of ways in which God has helped them and others in previous hard times. He states that such positive history thinking helps us to recall our own gifts and personal resources, as well as to be pointed to rely on the eventual working of God to bring about a resolution to our difficulties.

Another strategy to strengthen hope is to ask the person to recall a moment when he was in serious danger, but somehow being protected and getting through the experience. He reminds them about thanking God for rescuing them and then tries to apply the fact of God's intervention to the present crisis situation. He states that this process of transferring that gratitude and memory of the help received to the present situation brings a new level of hope into the person's life. Mottram states (156) 'The spiritual advocate has facilitated a

wonderful blessing for the person when faith can be strengthened. Trust in God and hope in God brings glory to his name.'

## **6. Addressing Children at Risk**

When addressing children at risk, several strategies are suggested for the church to employ in terms of interventions to help in the healing process. Binoy and Mohi (2009:229) list certain measures towards the prevention of sexual abuse. These include giving specific biblical teachings, outlining pastoral care, educating parents about protection of children and teaching children about sexual abuse.

Binoy and Mohi (2009:296) refer to the teaching of Scriptures such as Exodus 20:14 (against adultery), Deuteronomy 22:23–24, Exodus 22:16–17 and Leviticus 19:29 (against promiscuity), Leviticus 18:6–18 and Deuteronomy 22:25–27 (against rape) and Exekiel 23:3,8 and 21 referring to young prostitutes as an analogy for ungodly alliances. Here he cites (Martin G 1994:150) as saying that those early violations actually set the stage for their uncontrollable lust in later life. They refer to the resultant pain and despair that can last a lifetime, and state (very much in the line of Mottram 2007:144)

As good stewards of God, we need to listen to the children who are withering in pain and be sensitive to their need. They are so totally dependent on us that they look to us for truth in words and actions that is consistent with God's word.

In terms of pastoral care Binoy and Mohi (2009:296) state that the pastor must inform the congregation of possible sexual abuse of children even within the congregation. They refer to the Scriptures mandating the church to stand with those who are objects of harm and exploitation and protect the little ones (citing Holderread Heggen C. 1993:11). Binoy and Mohi (2009:297) state that it is imperative that pastors and church leaders take charge of this great challenge. They need to be sensitive and responsive to victims of child sexual abuse in their congregations and this response needs to be child-centred—before addressing the adults and the issues.

Binoy and Mohi state (2009:297) that the pastor's role should be that of detection and referral for professional counselling, to give support to all family members in the crisis, and to be facilitator's of God's healing. As most pastors do not have the expertise required for effective counselling, and this also applies to church members, Binoy and Mohi (297) state that the church should make every effort to educate staff and members concerning abuse-related issues, child safety, and suggested preventative measures. This would include training and education on the understanding of child sexual abuse and its impact on the developmental stage of a child. Binoy and Mohi (297) also state that this should become an integral core to ministerial Bible college and seminary training.

In terms of educating parents about the protection of children, Binoy and Mohi (2009:297) give a suggested priority order of teaching—first the parents, then their children: The parent should be taught about the potential danger of the sexual abuse of their children, but also about how to build relationships with their children so that they will go to their parents when faced with any uncomfortable situation.

Considering the educating of children about sexual abuse Binoy and Mohi (2009:297) state that we need to educate children to recognise and report any inappropriate touching. They need to understand the nature of sexual abuse at age-appropriate levels. Use of simple terms for the understanding of the child's own body and the difference between a 'good touch' and a 'bad touch' need to be explained (citing Virani P 2000:161).

Phillips (2009:570) addresses the issue of child-care givers. He states that if we, and he is particularly considering Christians here, really want to help the children then we need to take care of the people who give the children care. He believes that holistic child development of those children is only really possible when we give the needed help, support and training to the caregivers. He makes the valid point that the focus is often on the children, to the detriment or lack of attention given to the care-givers. Phillips mentions that they need to be shown care before they enter the profession, then during the time they are in service and thereafter. He states that in India there are many Christian caregivers who are committed, yet lack professional expertise. He comments on the motivation behind them becoming caregivers, saying that he

believes that most of them consciously or unconsciously get attracted to the profession because of their own childhood difficulties or traumas. It would fit the description of many caregivers world-wide, including South Africa. Because of these experiences, Phillips says (576), potential workers must have pre-service counselling to deal with the issues affecting their lives, providing healing for them so that they can be better-equipped agents for healing for the children. Christian psychologists would give much to ministering to the hurting if they were prepared to serve God in this way as an extra service. In India, says Phillips (576), most training is confined to spiritual devotions, with no specialised 'on-the-job' skills and professional training, particularly to face the special challenges this profession holds. He recommends a prayer support team be formed for the caregivers, as well as team support, communication, finance, and practical support tailored to the children's needs.

This is where the church should be exposed to this need by, for example, holding an Orphan Sunday, where the actual children and helpers can be introduced and adopted into a prayer group or some sort of on-going communication and care group, and where members of the congregation can visit and help the carers and the orphans through skills training, discipleship, and even giving periodic gifts to encourage them. The church would do well to contribute towards a pension scheme or accommodation costs once the carer has retired. In many countries, after-care for the aged is not really considered as a church responsibility.

Phillips (2009:577) suggests that the training for carers be given in the following manner: In the first year in spiritual knowledge and organisational skills. From the second year onwards in six-month refresher courses to enhance skills and knowledge to effect better child-care. After three years, he suggests that the carers go to a professional institution for more intense training. Phillips (578) sees obstacles in India which I am sure would apply world-wide: Charismatic rather than managerial leadership; church management which is often linked to a bureaucratic model instead of recent scientific principles; the grading of spiritual commitment superior to professional commitment; management more relational and community-orientated than to the individual. He states that the zeal and passion of the carer is more important to the leadership than a person with expertise. Clearly there needs to be church support for professionals to be involved in care-giving. The attitude of

sacrifice for others often from within the church itself (twisted theology—to be martyrs to serve) negates the importance of giving and sustaining reasonable living standards for the orphans and caregivers.

Suggestions that Phillips (2009:579) gives towards the problems mentioned are to train the existing caregivers already involved in schools, homes and NGOs, and secondly, to create training modules on holistic child care in institutions where it did not previously exist, and then to make this training readily available to the carers. This may require special financial subsidy or scholarship finance given by the church.

### **6.1 Sexual Exploitation**

In terms of sexual exploitation of children, excellent strategies were tabled in the ECPAT International Report of the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents held in Brazil in 2008. In addressing pornography, it was expressed that there was a great need for censorship and the effectual criminalization of intentional production, distribution, receipt and possession of child pornography. This included virtual images, the representation of children in sexually exploitative contexts, and intentional access and viewing of such materials (where there has been no actual physical contact with a child). It was also tabled that legal liability should fall on companies and corporations who initiated, produced or disseminated this material. A high priority was requested for ensuring specific, targeted action to prevent and stop child pornography, its production and dissemination. This includes internet and new technologies which groom children into online and off-line abuse. Victim identification, support and care by specialised staff were also listed as high priority.

Educational and awareness-raising campaigns showing the risks of sexually exploitive media (internet, mobile phones and other technologies) were suggested for children, parents, teachers, youth organisations and other child-service personnel. These campaigns were outlined to include information for children about ways in which to protect themselves, reporting child pornography and online sexual exploitation, and to get help.

It was tabled that legislative measures should ensure that monitoring and blocking procedures should be effected by relevant parties, who should report and remove child pornography websites and child sexual abuse images, and develop indicators to increase efforts for better results. In line with this it was recommended that the internet service providers, mobile phone companies, internet cafes and other service-providers, should be obligated to develop and implement social responsibility mechanisms such as voluntary Codes of Conduct, accompanied by legal tools to allow for implementation. It was recommended that Interpol should list infringing, sexually abusive websites, access to which would be blocked. This list, being current and international, would be continuously updated and could be a blocking tool.

These and many other very useful globally accepted suggestions are tabled on the Ecpat.net website.

Other tabled ratifications included undertaking further research and development, but simultaneously trying to make technologies easily available, affordable and usable for parents and other caregivers. This would include assisting them with the use of filters to block inappropriate and harmful images of children. It was pointed out that sexual abuse of children and adolescents causes long-term damage, requiring expert follow-up through health and emotional recovery programmes.

Warnings were issued about any type of sexual exploitation in the tourism industry and calls were made for more Interpol interventions, especially in the realm of child trafficking. This is in line with the UNICEF Guidelines on the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking and UNHCR Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child and legislation, programmes and policies to prevent and stop the trafficking of children.

It was tabled that child victims of sexual exploitation should be given the legal status and treatment of victims and should not be criminalised or punished for their acts directly related to their exploitation. In addition, the establishment of special gender sensitive units/children's desks within police forces should be encouraged.

Other items worth mentioning included establishing better legal mechanisms and management and rehabilitation programmes for addressing sex offender behaviour

and preventing the tendency to relapse into this sexually criminal behaviour. Extra financial allocations where children are most at risk, with the aim of protecting them from all forms of violence and abuse, were strongly recommended.

One statement from the congress report (2008:111) is noteworthy, especially as a date has been set for its implementation:

Establish, by 2013, an effective and accessible system for reporting, follow up and support for child victims of suspected or actual sexual exploitation. This could include the instituting of mandatory reporting for people in positions of responsibility for the welfare of children and give children access to existing telephone or web-based help lines, in particular especially for children in care and justice institutions, encouraging them and requiring care givers to confidentially report sexual exploitation and seek referral to appropriate services. (It would be necessary to ensure that the operators of such reporting mechanisms are adequately trained and supervised).

Some of the other suggestions are similarly excellent in theory, but one wonders how much better the world will be in a year's time?

At the conference the adolescents had opportunity to contribute their inputs, and this is what I would leave as the most important thrust of this whole thesis—to empower young people to become transformers in their world, but specifically from a God-honouring and God-empowered perspective! I quote from their manifesto in the ECPAT Third World congress Report (2008):

We the children of the world commend the Government of Brazil and the other governments and responsible agencies for giving us the children, the present and future of the world, a voice at this Third World Congress. The children have suffered too much from adult exploitation. But, organised and united, we have gone from being victims to actors. Our children's organisations give us the strength to defend ourselves and fight for our rights. We are here to contribute to the process of fighting this issue and raising awareness about this

problem that continues to grow larger. We respect the adults, our parents and the life rules of our different countries. But we also want the respect of all of you. Everyone has the right to respect and this is an attitude that everyone should take. However, it is not enough to just give us a voice but you **MUST** listen. Listen to our calls for urgent action, listen to our experiences and most importantly listen to our solutions.

## **6.2 Dysfunctional families**

Holborn and Eddy (2011:15) suggest steps for healing the South African Family in *The Way Forward*. In addressing the issues of risky sexual behaviour, use of drugs and alcohol, resorting to violence and crime, high unemployment, poverty and poor education, much of which stems from family breakdown, Holborn argues that global and local research confirms that growing up in stable families (with both parents present) can make a significant difference to the future outcomes of young people.

She suggests that we should alert the public that when only 35 per cent of children grow up living with both biological parents, the risk that dysfunctional families are damaging the prospects of our younger generations, including their likelihood to go on to have relationship problems and create fractured families themselves, is great and that this cycle needs to be broken.

Holborn (2011:15) cites Hoshe's suggestion that a number of policy changes could be adopted by the government and by NGOs. These result from suggestions made during a meeting with various organisations working with families and young people during 2011, to address the causes and effects of family breakdown. These suggestions include:

- Tackling unemployment so that fathers could be more able to be financially and emotionally involved in their children's lives.
- Improved research about family breakdown and its effects. This would be obtained if the family was given greater importance in research and policy-making.

- Special efforts should be made to access the services of more social workers, especially rurally. More financial incentives would need to be offered by government to attract more out of the private sector.
- Initiatives need to be taken to encourage older men to support young men when fathers are absent. This very important suggestion concurs with the spiritual imperative I included for the church with respect to spiritual fathers. It was also noted that there were schemes supporting grandmothers in caring for children, but the potential for grandfathers and male elders to play a role in filling the gap left by absent parents could be initiated with great effect.
- Sex education should have a focus on personal responsibility and the responsibility of being a parent. In addition, information about safe sex and contraception was deemed necessary. (Here the church would expressly include abstinence until marriage, and not promote the use of condoms, which still supports promiscuous behaviour).
- Greater importance should be given to the transmission of values to children and young people by individuals, schools, and through government policies.

Holborn (2011:15) notes that despite the many challenges faced by young people, most still remain positive about achieving their goals. She cites SA Crime Prevention in their article 'Running nowhere fast' (2011):

Some 94 per cent of 12-22 year-olds have a good idea of where they are heading in life, 99 per cent had specific goals they want to achieve, and 97 per cent believe that their own actions and efforts would determine whether they met their desired goals. Over 90 per cent of young people also feel that they will be able to cope with difficult situations in life.

Holborn (2011:15) raises the question of many young people being unaware of the obstacles towards them living healthy and successful lives, and how they might achieve much if given the chance to grow up in stable families and communities, with opportunity of a decent education and in a violence-free environment.

## **7. Biblical advice**

There are many good social values reflected by secular NGOs yet some clear biblical advice would enhance their value systems greatly. One example is where HIV prevention is suggested through the use of condoms (on SABC television) and the suggestion of sexual abstinence until marriage, as is clearly shown in Scripture, is omitted: 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh' (Genesis 2:24) and the teaching that God hates sexual immorality, 'You shall not commit adultery' (Exodus 20:14). 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 adds, 'Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.' Those unmarried people who profess to be Christians and are involved in fornication are given clear instructions, 'Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body' (1 Corinthians 6:18–20).

The church today is often lax when it comes to fearing God and honouring His instructions. If a person professes to be a Christian and is in a sexually immoral relationship, the Bible commands intervention from Christian leadership (1 Corinthians 5). Perhaps there is not enough accountability to Christian leaders for the personal lives of the congregation?

The other issue which endorses the need to harness men as mentors to younger men and families, needs to be qualified by the character references for elders in Titus 2, so that the quality of mentorship is God-honouring.

## **8. The Lausanne Global Conference Child Commitment, October 2010, Cape Town**

The Cape Town Commitment, issued after the conclusion of the Lausanne Global

Conference (2010:81) outlined the responsibilities of the church towards the plight of children and this we need to examine carefully.

Children and young people are the Church of today, not merely of tomorrow. Young people have great potential as active agents in God's mission. They represent an enormous under-used pool of influencers with sensitivity to the voice of God and a willingness to respond to him. We rejoice in the excellent ministries that serve among and with children, and long for such work to be multiplied since the need is so great. As we see in the Bible, God can and does use children and young people—their prayers, their insights, their words, their initiatives—in changing hearts. They represent 'new energy' to transform the world. Let us listen and not stifle their childlike spirituality with our adult rationalistic approaches.

On behalf of the church world-wide, the Commitment included taking children seriously, through fresh biblical and theological enquiry reflecting on God's love and purpose for them and through them, and by rediscovering the profound significance for theology and mission of Jesus' stress on giving the child priority in ministry focus.

It states that the church will commit itself to seek to train people and provide resources to meet the needs of children worldwide, and wherever possible, it would work with their families and communities holistically to and through each next generation of children and young people as a vital component of world mission. The final commitment was to expose, resist, and act against all abuse of children, including wilful neglect, violence, gender and ethnic discrimination, and commercial targeting and exploitation, including prostitution slavery, and trafficking.

## **9. The church as an agent of healing**

God and His church have the means to reach the deep inner hurts of people and that all the welfare and help given in the secular sense eases the situation, but treats symptoms and not the root cause, which is generally the sin of mankind and the need for God's direct touch in healing, I will focus here on the spiritual helps available and mention models of success.

How would a Christian counsellor and carer deal with a child who has been sexually abused? The essential differences in approach between a non-Christian counsellor and a Christian counsellor to a counselee would be the addition of a spiritual dimension of relationship with God and the acknowledgement of His willingness to help the counselee in each case.

Rotokha (2009:177) suggests a theological response to modern day slavery of children, which includes child prostitution and trafficking. He states that because of its magnitude child prostitution should be given separate attention to child abuse and/or child labour. Because of the sexual diseases associated with child prostitution, especially HIV/AIDS and other STDs like Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), Herpes and Hepatitis B, special attention needs to be given, and especially to street children.

The church has within its ranks medical practitioners and media who could be asked to be available on a specific day for a clinic for street children, but this would have to be advertised by the media and to caring full-time or overnight care centres. The children somehow need to be informed of these dangers, and that Christians who can possibly extend themselves in this way should do so.

Rotoka argues that the prostitute child has been pushed into a state of abject slavery, engendering fear, self-esteem and is damaged for life. The church can be instrumental as a major role player, because of the gospel message of God's love, to make efforts to reclaim the basics of familial values. Rotokha (:186) states in terms of child rights:

Not only does the child have right in the legal sense but also intrinsically: the right has the right against such atrocities because the child is made in the image of God as much as any adult is. It is the right of the child to live a full and healthy life. The child has rights against anything that strips his/her humanity and dignity. God loves children, particularly the victims of this evil practice and forgives them for being forced into prostitution and earn their living.

## 10. Advice for the single parent

In terms of abandonment of a child by a parent and strategies suggested for the remaining single parent to be instrumental in the healing process, Wolf (2006), a coach for single parents, refers to the abandonment by a parent of children in the home of a single parent due to divorce:

Abandonment refers a parent's choice to have no role in his/her child's life. This includes failure to support the child financially, as well as failure to communicate with the child or have any type of active role in the child's life. Sadly, parental abandonment leaves a child with lingering questions about his or her own self-worth.

She suggests that strategies of help towards improving a child's self-esteem and ability to cope with the absence of the other parent for the remaining parent, include being alert to the fact that children who have been abandoned by a parent may reject everything about that absent parent—and may make a concerted effort to completely reject him or her. This is evidenced when the child's behaviour is the exact opposite of the absent parent. The suggested strategies for the remaining single parent to tackle this problem include affirming the child's own special unique qualities. Wolf (2006) states that the child should be allowed to share his or her thoughts and opinions even if it is in opposition to that of the parent, who should simply respond in an understanding way with words like 'I can understand why you might feel that way right now.'

The opposite emotion may also be evidenced by the child, namely idealising the absent parent. A child may over-identify with the absent parent and fantasise about him or her to provide temporary, but unrealistic comfort. The suggested strategy here is to allow the child to freely verbalise his or her memories of the absent parent. Wolf advises that the parent needs to listen without trying to correct defective recollections. Asking open-ended questions, she says, may help the child to add additional details related to his or her memories. Because a child who has been abandoned generally develops poor self-esteem and a sense of guilt or shame surrounding the parent's absence—whether they felt better off without the child and

even whether the child deserved to be abandoned, it is important to continually reassure the child that he or she is not at fault.

Wolf also suggests one should be specific when praising the child, and that the single parent must provide opportunities for the child to develop relationships with other trusted adults, to convey genuine, positive messages about his or her abilities, character, and contributions towards others. She cites Balcom (2008) discussing some symptoms shown in adult sons who were abandoned by their fathers, and she suggests ways of preventing possible long-term effects. These include a child who has been abandoned by a parent possibly finding it difficult to express his or her emotions, bottling them up, and not having enough trust to share his or her true self with others. Wolf suggests that a healing strategy from the single parent in such a circumstance is to affirm love for the child--even when he is angry, frustrated or sad. She also agrees with Balcom that the single parent must prove trustworthy. The child's confidences should never be shared with friends and acquaintances, which is tantamount to betrayal. Here Wolf suggests that the single parent should spend regular quality time connecting with the child, creating an atmosphere conducive for sharing with the parent.

## **11. The orphan**

Titus (2009:247) states that the biblical understanding of 'orphan' by implication also includes children who have been neglected, abused, abandoned and/or exploited. He refers to the Old Testament law providing for the material needs of orphans and widows who were to be fed from the third year's tithe (Deuteronomy 14:28–29; 24:19–21; 26:12–13), from forgotten sheaves in the fields and from fruit God commanded to be left on the trees and vines. He also refers to God's warnings not to take advantage of orphans and widows (Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 24:17; 27:19; Psalm 82:3; Isaiah 1:17). The church should realise that having been instructed to take care of orphans if we fail to do so we are sinning.

Titus (2009:242–250) refers to strategies which the church should adopt to care for orphans. He states that the orphan's search for identity has everything to do with security and empowerment. Where the local church can help to secure identity

documents for local orphans or street children at centres, it should endeavour to do so. This is a request for church members who are social workers or lawyers to extend themselves to this ministry. The church should be informed about the seriousness of a child not having an identity document, which includes the possible inaccessibility of social grants. In India, Titus (243) states that orphans are often denied property inheritance, scholarships and business loans, and the courts are slow to uphold their rights. This may be true to a certain extent in South Africa. As in India, many programmes are focused on material support and on meeting orphans' physical needs and not their spiritual or relational needs. This is where the church can reach out in discipleship, supplying resources, but especially encouraging mentors to run regular discipleship groups with the orphans.

Titus (2009:244) states that the church has a role to play in helping the orphans with relationships with extended family or church family, by regularly inviting orphans into their homes. When no money is available for schooling and other needs, the stigmatization of orphans often worsens among their peers, especially if they are at a school where children have parents. Churches are encouraged to give financial assistance in this regard and to teach their children to value these peers, who are also special to God, even more so because of their lack of parents. That would imply special teaching on caring for others. The other reason to invite orphans into families and community life is that those brought up in orphan homes usually develop relationships with the children of the same sex and not in a family context. They are therefore deprived of the opportunity to relate to brothers and sisters and parents in a happy family environment. Titus states that this phenomenon, actual identity crisis, reflects in the inability to establish relationship in society.

How can the church further address orphan identity crisis? Titus (2009:245) suggests, and these suggestions also address the needs of street children, that Christians should be aware of the need to offer family fellowship, but also to help in a range of different areas. These include giving help to a range of alternative forms of care for orphan and vulnerable children, including adoption, day care centres, night shelters, and drop-in centres. Titus (245) suggests that ways in which to address the identity crisis in these children would include providing future opportunities for them to study and to receive skills training.

Titus (2009:245) distinguishes between stigma (a perception) and discrimination (an act) and states that there is much denial at all levels concerning orphans and these issues. The church needs to accelerate alleviation of these problems by overtly caring about the well-being of these children in active ways, but especially in including them in many family activities. The ideal is foster care for individual orphans with the aim to adopt them. They need to interact with friends, neighbours and other members of society, otherwise, as the years progress, the orphans feel like victims without control of life or will-power in facing the challenges of society.

Titus (2009:249) encourages the church to form new structures for community-based care and not the traditional institutionally-based care (based on service-delivery). This could involve setting up sports or music facilities which integrate children who have parents with marginalised children.

## **12. Community-based support**

Here is a key strategy for the church to consider. Community-based support and accessing community resources to address all the needs in a geographic area would include the marginalised children. This would include library or computer-centre activities and could easily be considered as an extension of after-school care on the church premises. A community health education class could also be one of the possibilities. For instance, Titus (2009:249) cites a programme where included in the teaching was a time to address stigma and discrimination, strengthening linkages, providing psychosocial support and which ensured that the children participated in the planning and implementation. Clearly, their participation gave them a voice, a measure of control, worth, solidarity, and responsibility. This built up their confidence and gave them a sense of success.

## **13. Helping adolescents**

In terms of addressing the church towards helping hurting adolescents, in response to a survey, *The Spiritual State of the World's Children*, conducted in 2009 among 4,288 adolescents (53 per cent being female and 47 per cent male), the group, One Hope, made the following suggestions for a strategy of addressing their needs according to the data collected:

Discipleship programmes, which apply biblical principles in the vital areas of social and moral values' formation, should be developed. Family systems must receive support. Churches should equip parents to train and inform their children through teaching and role-modelling and provide parenting to children orphaned or in single parent homes. The report states further that churches should:

1. Promote healthy communication between families.
2. Allow youth to ask taboo questions concerning subjects such as teen pregnancy, homosexuality and sex.
3. Correct perceptions of media heroes who are poor moral examples.
4. Deal with the realities of crime, poverty and negative social environment (part of holistic development).
5. Consider partnering with social development agencies.
6. Consider partnering with government.

None of these strategies will materialise unless the church leadership is motivated to make every effort to meet the needs of the hurting children and youth with intentional planning, finance release and creative ideas for community-based implementation and congregational participation.

#### **14. The Evergreen Counselling STOP model for traumatised children**

Coetsee (2009:82–84) cites the Evergreen Counselling Centre in Colorado's STOP model of healing therapy as being extremely effective. It was originally formulated to help child victims of the Vietnam War. Children who are given this therapy typically have had chaotic, non-structured, unstable home environments. They lack love and many have suffered abuse. They are fearful because of their suffering and the fear they have experienced within their own 'home' or community. The healing takes

place though trust-worthy adults introducing **Structure**, **Time** spent with them, **Organised Play** and **Parental Support** being overtly brought into their lives.

This model needs to be endorsed, not only as an excellent clinical model for use by secular psychologists, but especially by Christian practitioners. The greatest healer is the Holy Spirit, so if a child can make a decision to follow Christ and know Him as Lord, he can expect the Holy Spirit to effect much healing because of his receptive spirit. Romans 8:9–11 says,

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

A child who was traumatised can only find healing in the stability presented by adults whom they can trust and who can help them to understand what happened, what they are feeling and how to deal with these feelings and emotions.

Traumatised children firstly need **structure**. Regular daily routines such as meal- and bed-times, school, homework and household chores, give structure and a sense of safety and security. Trauma can disrupt that structure. Their environment must therefore be stabilised to provide a place where they can feel safe again and where there is order and discipline. This can only be accomplished effectively by placing them in temporary family structures where reliable adults will take on the role of parents to guide them and take care of their basic needs.

The second aspect of the model is to provide the children with **time to talk** about what they have experienced. The children need someone whom they can trust and who is willing to listen to them in an unforced manner. The counsellor must find a place where the child feels safe and give him time to tell his story in his own way, how he feels and what he experienced during the trauma. This needs to be without interrogation but with an understanding response. The counsellor should not be

judgemental or questioning, neither should he give advice or trite reassurances, but instead should just be there as a friend and a good listener.

**Organised play** may be the best approach to use. The counsellor intentionally provides various items such as a range of toys, which could include predator and vulnerable animals, or doll characters, a dolls' house with furniture, Lego, a punch bag, sand trays, paper and crayons. The counsellor observes the child closely. The child may build a structure with people in it and then suddenly destroy everything. Initially the counsellor may say, 'You have just built a house with people. Do you want to tell me about them?' After observing the child's anger or anxiety while destroying his building the counsellor may ask, 'Do you want to tell me what has happened?' This is a slow process, but over time the relationship between child and counsellor will enable the child to express his feelings and gain control over his emotions.

The last aspect of the process is **parental** support. It is therefore imperative that substitute parents/carers be found for each child. Parental support is very important for these children as it helps them to feel safe and secure.

The church could and should be a support to all children in this situation by coming alongside in suitable ways. These include visiting the children regularly, inviting them into their homes and over a period of time gently disciplining them in the ways of the Lord, in an atmosphere of love and care.

## **15. The vital difference between a Christian and a non-Christian counsellor**

A non-Christian counsellor will use all the scientific methods and strategies accepted by experts for counselling, but the Christian (born-again believer) counsellor, has the knowledge and experience of God's divine intervention and understands that deep spiritual healing is possible through the work of the Holy Spirit. God, through the death and resurrection of Jesus, established a covenant of peace and it is only the Holy Spirit that can bring God's peace and restoration to a wounded child, who allows the Lord to intervene in his life. The child is not manipulated to 'accept Jesus' as Saviour, especially in his violated and damaged state, but the counsellor prays for

him and receives guidance, sensitivity and special help from the Lord in dealing with him-- a spirit of discernment. The Christian counsellor knows that the Lord can recreate in that child the image of Christ and replace his wounded spirit with a new spirit which He can mould and help in a special way. The Holy Spirit can work in a special way through the counsellor in order to restore in the counsellee the image of Christ and to bring him to a place of wholeness, soundness and freedom from the effects of sin, so that he can experience the peace of God. The process relies on healing relationships that must be formed and can only be accomplished successfully within a community of believers. Only God can remove the old spirit of hate, anger, bitterness and allow him to trust again. When the Holy Spirit restores in a child the image of God it means that the child will be made whole. Wholeness is experiencing God's peace and living a life of love, freedom, comfort, salvation, forgiveness, confidence, and good self-image when the child realises how special he is to God.

The community forms the basis of any process of healing. Healing communities can either be seen as active where the Holy Spirit is using them in the healing process of the child, or passive where the Holy Spirit is working in the community, which is itself in a process of healing. The same is true for healing relationships. Children are wounded in unhealthy relationships and therefore no healing can take place unless the child enters into a trusting, healing relationship. These relationships can also be either active or passive. The child enters into a safe environment where he can recover, while his own broken relationships with others and with God can be restored.

## **16. Models of Good Practice**

In addition to the strategies listed above, I investigated those of several organisations which I considered were making a considerable difference in hurting communities. Here is a brief list of strategies which I suggest are models of good practice in South Africa.

1. Give a Child a family: Margate, South Coast (Monica Woodhouse)

2. Jerusalem Ministries and Human Dignity Centre: Port Elizabeth (Derek and Dianne Darlow).

### **16.1 Give a Child a family**

According to Woodhouse (2010) Give a Child a Family has developed a programme that prepares and assists families for fostering as a first option, with just a small step into adoption. Their goal is to facilitate the move of children into loving caring families, holding families accountable to care for children effectively, but with the offer of support in this process. Their strategy of advocacy and collaboration with provincial governance bodies is to liaise with the Department of Social development and to speaking at conferences. Their multiplication strategy has been effected through the writing of training materials, particularly for the use of potential and current foster parents. Social workers are taught how to assess prospective foster-parents and this gives them 20 CPD points towards their yearly quota, as the programme is registered with the South African Council of Social Services Profession.

The strategies for follow-up support and sustainability for foster parents include compulsory attendance of a 5-day course which covers a vast number of aspects including personal issues, family and children. Then they spend a minimum of 2 years in support groups where the material is practised and discussed further. Thereafter there are opportunities to attend Grief and Bereavement Counselling courses, Life Skills training courses and practical training courses for the production of Food Gardens. The new parents are connected to a social worker and a support group.

Give a Child a Family has a bank of foster-parents and all the organisations in their area know that they can get foster parents from them. They network very closely with these organisations, which also work with children, and where they need to they connect them to adoption agencies. In terms of making this service known they periodically make use of our local newspapers and radio.

Woodhouse says that since the inception of her organisation, churches have generally been slow in coming forward. They have very good relationships but

because each has its own ministries and its own way of doing things, and many think that because they are doing spiritual work, they do not have to align it to government laws. Because Woodhouse is the chairlady of the Welfare Liaison she has been in a position where she has been able to foster relationships with like-minded organisations and has been able to organise forums for other organisations so see where there are gaps in this area.

Ongoing strategy vision includes furthering their replication programme and getting the social workers course out nationally so that they can train social workers to look out for better parents as well as to network with other organisations in other parts of Africa. In this regard, they ran a conference with 414 delegates from 40 countries in September 2009, which resulted in the first Conference on Family-Based Care and the training.

## **16.2 Jerusalem Ministries**

I had the opportunity of visiting this organisation in Port Elizabeth, several times during 2011, and interviewed the founders, Derek and Di Darlow, as well as visiting the nursery schools and meeting the staff, orphan carers, children and volunteers.

Jerusalem Ministries was founded in 1995 and has developed into an organisation that has a heart for marginalised communities. Among the ministries they run, which includes helping destitute and homeless men fit back into society, they have set up the Human Dignity Centre (HDC), which is a community outreach project adjoining the Walmer Township called Gqebera, is an impoverished shack area where poverty, HIV infection, crime and abuse are rife. The Human Dignity Centre addresses the issues of children in crisis and is aimed at orphans and the most vulnerable children, many of whom live off the Arlington Refuse Tip. They are given developmental, holistic assistance. The children and their carers are supported in an effort to restore a safe and functional home environment for the children.

Other projects include

- Caring for orphans in private homes (an orphanage without walls).
- Feeding schemes where the parents/caregivers do gardening or chores for

food.

- A pre-school (ECD) (where maintenance is subsidised by caregivers doing cleaning duties at the school).
- Grades 1–2 classes (again subsidised by the caregivers doing cleaning duties at the school).
- Aftercare facility for HDC children as well as their older siblings.
- Counselling and support to the children and parents (and caregivers).
- Community development and skills based training/income generation projects.
- The Sukume Xhosa Culture Centre which aims to provide an outlet for the hand-made goods from the beneficiaries.

Through a partnership with other organisations, the centre also assists nineteen other pre-schools in the area with food, training and shared toys and furniture and other resources.

Again, as in the case of Give a Child a Family, I see in Jerusalem Ministries successful strategies for long-term sustainability through the people, the projects and goals and methods listed. The need, in both cases, is to partner with the local body of believers more effectively to motivate and harness their personal support and involvement.

## **17. My personal strategies to respond to the crises of children in South Africa**

### **17.1 To share the vision of the TWGS 2012**

The TWGS is 'To revitalize the Church to Renew the Culture' with denominational leaders and NGOs serving hurting children. In this regard the declarations of intent and resource lists have been made available for each challenge area and I am able to send them to strategic role players, especially for the orphan and family challenge. This is a personal plan for implementation after attending the orphan challenge,

educational sphere during 2013. This strategic material has been made available to access on Christian Lounge on the South African Theological Seminary's website.

### **17.2 Courses offered by the South African Theological Seminary**

In my role as tutor, I have seen theological students engaging with children's ministry subjects and their assignment interactions with pastors and youth leaders. I have read their testimonies about their newly formed perceptions of the importance of children and about their building relationships with them as a result of engaging with *Walking with Wounded Children*, one of the courses (CYM2127) which the South African Theological Seminary offers. It has clearly been strategic in the lives of students themselves and in changing the church through impacting its leadership, and that this will have long-term benefit as individuals and communities are impacted. I would be available to conduct a Seminar which would include some of this material.

### **17.3 The Children in Crisis in South Africa Manual**

In the related manual, *Children in Crisis in South Africa*, which I produced and made available as subsidiary help to disseminate knowledge on basic reasons and suggested remediations for crisis, some strategic help is provided so that children, youth and adults can better understand these issues and receive spiritual guidance and comfort. I would have this available to give mentors and orphan carers.

In terms of new material that I would like to use for training the Apples of Gold mentor leaders and orphan carers, I would make available some simplified teaching material on sexual purity for Chapter 4 of this thesis, in a new *Mentor's Training Manual*.

## **18. The Shape of things to come**

I whole-heartedly endorse the declaration that was formulated at the South African Consultation of TEASA, SACC and Compassion International (July 28–29 2009), at which I represented the South African Theological Seminary. I quote from *The Declaration Statement on Children and Youth: The Shape of Things to Come*:

There are no unreached children and youth. If the Church doesn't reach them, someone will—other faiths, political ideologies, secularism, corporate marketing, people traffickers, or a myriad of other frightening and unwholesome possibilities. Children and youth bear the brunt of our world's hedonism and brokenness, and the worst aspects of globalization. And yet they are the most receptive to the Truths of the gospel. The early years, while hearts and minds are still impressionable, is the time when most decisions are made to follow Christ. Children are the shape of things to come. Either we help to shape their lives in godly ways, or the world will shape them into its mould. Children and young people also have great potential as active agents God' mission. They represent an enormous untapped pool of influencers with sensitivity to the voice of God and a willingness to respond. Just as we see in Scripture, God can and does use children and young people—their prayers, their insights, their hands, and their feet—in changing the hearts of humankind. They represent 'new energy' to transform the world. (2009).

The key issues in the declaration have generally been covered in this thesis, but I would add a few, which could have profound effect if taken to heart: Because the Church has failed to reach the next generation, not only the children, but our churches and very societies are at risk. The fact that children and young people have great capacity and thrive on challenges is important for the church to note. The church has not properly appreciated the contribution children can make in church and society, and thus we have neglected to use their contribution as a precious resource.

It was recognised by the delegates at this Children's Ministry Convention (July 28–29 2009) that God is already working in the hearts of people—in a new attitude and openness to children and childhood, and specifically within the church (in some quarters), their role in the church and in mission.

In the declaration (2009) there was a Call to Action for the future, one which we as a body of believers should heed today; it is time for the Global Church to take children

seriously and to prioritise holistic ministry to children as a vital component of future world evangelisation. We also need to repent about being short-sighted in neglecting God's command to care for children. We also need to harness and release the new energy of children.

As part of the declaration, a commitment was tabled:

- To reflect on children through meaningful biblical and theological inquiry.
- To resist and take action against all forms of violence and exploitation against children.
- To rally together to meet the diverse and complex needs of the world's children and young people.
- To release skills, finances, and technologies to ensure that Christians everywhere can access the best models, training and resources.
- To rediscover the significance of the provocative action of Jesus placing 'a child in the midst'.

The appeal for each delegate and the task team at the closure of the South African Children's Ministry Convention (July 2009), was, where possible, to try to influence the influencers of our country—denominational leaders and political leaders and government, and wherever possible to overtly welcome children in all personal and community spheres, and especially in the church: 'Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me' (Matthew 18:5).

Our upbringing is moulded into our personalities. That is why abuse is often cyclic-perpetuated in further generations. Only God and a caring family and godly community can bring real healing. All the statistics and research quoted testify to these facts.

My own testimony is that a godly, caring husband has nurtured my family and children, who love God and serve Him even as adults. By God's grace, right up to this time they have been trained in the way they should go, and did not depart from it

Proverbs 22:6. They were also nurtured according to Deuteronomy 6:5–9 with a continual awareness of the wonder of God, His Word, Sunday School, Christian camps, Christian fun groups and godly mentors. This was partially from parents and godly grandparents, but is ultimately because of the mercy of God Himself. His love worked through the life-style of genuine Spirit-filled Christians, who also shared input from His word in spiritual application: ‘I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching’ (2 Timothy 4:1–2).

‘And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and man’ (Luke 2:52). This verse shows the importance of holistic child development—education, physical provision such as food and water and in receiving adequate exercise, and in spiritual relationship. The knowledge that in God’s sight children are extremely precious and valuable, as well as their value to our fellow man, is really important and adds to their emotional well-being. Keith White’s principles at the Millgrove Home for Orphans in England are very important, namely, safety, significance, boundaries, creativity and community.

The pure logic of good input resulting in good output, and the reality of reaping what we sow, is profoundly exemplified in James 3:12–18:

Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water. Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

## **19. Conclusion**

In this chapter I have listed a range of successfully tested strategies and suggested some additions. I strongly believe that by implementing them, the church will make a significant contribution towards addressing the abuse and neglect of children.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

### **1. Research objective**

The primary objective of this thesis is to motivate the evangelical church to effectively respond to meeting the needs of children in crisis particularly in South Africa. The modus operandi of meeting this objective was firstly to conduct research to investigate the levels of crisis in the lives of children, both globally and in South Africa. The research would ascertain whether there were causes of crisis which were more prevalent, and whether these had holistic effects on the children. This research would then be related to biblical and theological imperatives for the church to adopt in order to address these crises. Strategies for the church to give effective help to children in crisis would then be suggested so that transformation in this area could be addressed in such a way that true long-term healing could take place. The understanding was that human effort is not sufficient and that the Holy Spirit's help is vital in this process, both for the child being healed and for the church. Thus the resultant objective would be to challenge the church (all generations) to make substantive efforts to relieve these crises.

### **2. The Research Design**

This thesis in Practical Theology utilised the research model developed by Osmer (2008). Phase 1 of the study (Chapter 2) investigated global trends and thereafter (Chapter 3), investigated specific trends in South Africa from the perspective of Osmer's (2008) descriptive and interpretive tasks by surveying the crises facing children in South Africa. This component of the study drew on existing research data from sources such as official (government) statistics, the findings of research at South African universities in fields like sociology, community development, and psychology and from books by well-respected authorities on children. This phase asked Osmer's first two questions, 'What is going on?' and 'Why is it going on?' in an attempt to identify the most important issues that need to be addressed regarding children in crisis in South Africa.

Phase 2 addressed Osmer's (2008) normative task, seeking to determine how the Christian community ought to respond to the crises facing children. This phase consisted of three components. According to Osmer, the normative task needed to involve all three forms of analysis:

a) Theological and biblical interpretation and presentation of imperatives for the church in response to the challenge of children in crisis (Chapter 4). This was the approach used.

b) Chapter 5 presented suggested strategies for healing for children in crisis. Many of these were based on strategies of the spheres and challenge groups from the 2012 Transform Global World Summit in Bali, as well as presenting case studies of models of good practice, such as those of selected Christian organisations and their responses to children in crisis. This involved some empirical investigation and interviews with role-players in these institutions. These include Give a Child a Family, which is situated in Margate, Kwazulu-Natal and which focuses especially on abandoned children and education for foster care, and Jerusalem Ministries (and its Human Dignity Centre), which is in Port Elizabeth and concentrates on vulnerable children.

c) Chapter 5 also considered application of those strategies—the pragmatic task: There was some application of the South African Theological Seminary training material 'Walking with Wounded Children' to children in crisis, and a report on a manual I produced for a pilot study for this thesis 'Children in Crisis in South Africa'. Osmer's pragmatic task involved formulating a practical response to the situation, including reference to the Camp Faraway Project in Noordhoek, Cape Town for 'Farming God's Way'. The pragmatic task could be considered as the challenge to apply healing strategies, as seen in the models of good practice described in Chapter 5, as well as in suggested application for the church and personal application for future dealings with children in crisis.

### **3. Review of findings**

This primary objective of motivating the church to respond to the needs of children in crisis in South Africa was addressed by answering five key questions:

1. What global trends in holistic child development are evident currently?

The major trends are the prevalence of neglect and abuse. The research evidenced the fact that many children are in crisis and mainly because of neglect and abuse, both globally and specifically, in South Africa. These two problems clearly affect all other avenues of the child's life—his physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. I believe therefore that concentration on *these* areas of crisis, especially if the proposed remedies are sought and implemented, should affect the other areas of the child's life in a positive manner.

2. What are the most important issues that need to be addressed regarding children in crisis in South Africa?

The lack of understanding of the importance of children in God's sight, as portrayed throughout the Bible, both by adults in general and even in the attitude of church leadership, requires correction. The statistics of dysfunctional families highlighted in Chapter 3, clearly showed that the family unit in South Africa is in jeopardy, and very especially in terms of absent fathers.

Statistics about teenage pregnancies, maternal and paternal orphans, and lack of financial support rendering some help NGO initiatives unsustainable, are major areas to be addressed.

In the belittling and actual removal of Christian principles in society, there are serious ramifications for children and youth for the future. The crisis of a lack of sound spiritual life principles, especially in obeying the precepts and statutes God directed in the Bible, and in the resultant relativism and justification of living according to one's own ethical and moral values, places the individual, family and society at risk.

3. What are the biblical and theological imperatives for holistic children's ministry in response to the South African situation?

These imperatives include:

1. The church must restore children to the priority position the Bible gives them. This includes addressing the problem of self-centred or proud rank-focused adults, the consideration of the simplicity of a child and adults as stumbling blocks to children. The ideal of receiving children (giving them significance) and nurture is of fundamental importance.

2. Parents must understand the Father-heart of God as related to godly parenting and extend their spiritual nurture beyond their own biological children to children of the community. Here, the characteristics of the Father reflected in His Son, Jesus, are stated as a focal area for parents on which to base their model of parenting. The spiritual mandate for parents' is given, including love, comfort, and the need to bring them up in the ways of the Lord.

The historical context of parenting and education is considered in terms of parenting and education, the importance of sharing Bible stories, mentorship, warnings against false teaching, worship and the need to provide for our children.

The salvation of children, advocacy of children, applying godly discipline to our children, reconciliation and the remediation for lack of fatherly care is included.

3. The church must intentionally train parents, children and carers in biblical values, and especially in sexual purity, as this is a crucial need in terms of crisis for children.

The exegesis of major biblical passages concerning sexual purity is given intentional focus as a separate imperative, as sexual impurity is a crucial reason for much crisis in the lives of adults and children in South Africa. The passages exegeted include Leviticus 20:7–14; 17–23; 1 Corinthians 5:1–8; 6:9–20; chapter 7 and Malachi 2:10–16. Passages which endorse healthy love and sexual purity are included.

4. The church must respond strategically to children in crisis in South Africa.

The church is challenged to fight injustice, and about being called to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, including continuing His mission (John 20:21–23; Acts 1:1–8). Here, the following passages are exegeted: Isaiah 61:1–4;

Ephesians 2:10; James 1:21–25; Psalm 68:5–6; Titus 2 and 3 and 1 Timothy 5:7–10. The witness of believers is discussed, as well as the comforting role of the Holy Spirit. Practical tasks are included in this section.

4. What can be learned from churches and ministries that are effectively ministering to children in crisis in South Africa?

The first consideration is the need of salvation and thereafter strategies are suggested for the church in response to the crisis. Strategies adopted by the spheres and challenge areas of the Transform World Global Summit, Bali 2012 were used as a basis for the church to apply. Models included the teamwork model by Patrick Lencioni; Bush's model of servant catalysts for culture change; the self-sustainability projects from the Poverty Challenge and indigenized discipleship projects from Christ's Missional Challenge, as well as strategies from the Orphan Challenge

Strategies for reaching and helping estranged family or adult relatives of orphans or abused children, informing orphan carers about resources for children, in general and orphan-care resources, were included.

Strategies in trauma support describing Mottham's campaigns for spiritual advocacy and support for those suffering from trauma, as well as strategies for the church to consider when dealing with Children at Risk, were included. These included several interventions for the church to deploy to help in the healing process, which include listing certain measures towards the prevention of sexual abuse.

Strategies addressing the care of and provision for child-care givers were considered, as were the strategies tabled by the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents held in Brazil in 2008.

Finally, strategies for dealing with dysfunctional families were also included.

## 5. How might the church develop a ministry response?

In considering the implementation of these strategies, models of good practice, as well as commitments of the global and local church for action in the future, the following were listed: the biblical approach, The Cape Town Commitment, the church as an agent of healing and advice was given for the single parent. The orphan's sense of identity can be helped by the church in terms of the physical, the spiritual and the emotional. Community-based support can be harnessed by the church to make communal resources, such as sports grounds, accessible to marginalized children. Suggestions for remediation and discipleship for adolescents were made. The process of helping a traumatised child towards healing and stability was outlined. The vital difference between a Christian and a non-Christian counsellor was explained.

Models of good practice with a measurable track record and consistent sustainability measures were described, namely Give a Child a Family and Jerusalem Ministries.

My own personal strategies to respond to the crises of children in South Africa were shared, as was the vision of the TWGS 2012. Courses offered by the South African Theological Seminary were outlined, particularly in view of the catalytic effect the student body can have on the community.

Finally the Children in Crisis in South Africa Manual, which describes the root causes of some crises' elements was described and made available.

## **6. Conclusion**

The outcome of this thesis was that not only was the scale of children in crisis shown to be of enormous proportion, both globally and in South Africa, but the most prominent types of crisis were neglect and abuse, particularly sexual abuse. The fact that the damage caused is deep, long-term and holistic—affecting emotional social and spiritual well-being of children, and is carried into adulthood and often perpetuated in the next and future generations, is even more reason to give a serious mandate to the church to help children in crisis.

The biblical imperatives to heal hurting children that I suggested, as I considered priorities for the church, arose from this research and have far-reaching implications for the Kingdom.

On-going advocacy giving children priority in ministry, advocacy for godly homes to focus on the Father-heart of God as parents bring up children, are vital considerations. Christian parents extending themselves to help children outside of the family, especially hurting children, as well as teaching children the biblical way they should go, should be encouraged. The seriousness of sexual immorality and wrong world-values being endorsed by the media and by non-Christians, require extra teaching on sexual purity—both to parents and children. Finally, the church needs to be harnessed and engaged to give practical help, as well as to evangelise and love children within and without the church. This should be done in a holistic manner with extra care and nurture offered to marginalised children.

The church is challenged to extend ministry to children at risk, and to harness and mobilise the GEN-Y and Z generations to be catalysts for transformation ‘to revitalize the church to renew the culture’ specifically in terms of ministering to hurting children. This challenge is also a challenge to have the courage to address the injustices in society, by taking a stand about God creating human beings in His image to reflect His glory and for them, including the children, to be considered worthy of dignity and honour.

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